



# ABINGDON-ON-THAMES TOWN COUNCIL

## Council Summons & Agenda

**Wednesday 29 June 2022**

24 June 2022

To All Members of the Council

Dear Councillors,

You are hereby summoned to attend a meeting of the Abingdon-on-Thames Town Council to be held on **Wednesday 29 June 2022 at 7pm** in the **Old Magistrates Court** for the transaction of the business stated below.

If you are unable to attend in person you may participate in the meeting via a Teams link, which will be sent to all Members.

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.

## **AGENDA**

### **One minutes' silence**

Brian Tonkin and Johannah Aynsley

The Council will observe a minutes' silence in memory and thanks for the lives of two former members of staff both of whom have sadly died since the last meeting of the Council:

Brian Tonkin – Town Clerk from 1985 to 2000.

Johannah Aynsley – Guildhall Manager from 2012 to 2016.

### 1. **Prayers**

Revd Kath Cook will lead the meeting in prayer.

### 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 5pm on Monday 27 June 2022.

A presentation from Nia Williams, Sustrans, regarding the Bridge Street/East St Helen Street/Market Place scheme development.

### 3. **Apologies**

To receive apologies for absence.

### 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**

i) To adopt and sign as a correct record the draft minutes of the meeting held on 30 [March 2022](#), of the Annual Council meeting held [11 May 2022](#) and the Special meeting held on [23 May 2022](#).

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**AGENDA**

Before adopting the minutes of the meeting held on 30 March, clarification is required regarding face-to-face meetings, minute C103, 3.1 refers.

At the meeting it was resolved that all meetings of the Council and its various committees should be in person, in line with government requirements. The report of the Town Clerk to the Council on 30 March 2022 referred to going forward with a hybrid-type system “which would enable those unable to attend in person to participate in the meeting, albeit not allowed to vote.” However this was not moved and therefore was not reflected in the resolution agreed by the Council.

The government has indicated their will to move towards allowing councils to conduct hybrid meetings where virtual attendees would have the ability to fully participate. However the current law requires that meetings are in person.

Some councils do not allow any virtual participation by Members on the basis that by so doing they are influencing decisions which must be made in person. However other Councils, including our local district council, do allow a degree of virtual participation whilst ensuring that decisions are made in-person.

The Town Clerk reported further at the meeting of the Finance, Governance and Asset Management Committee on 21 June and the Committee discussed the benefits of virtual participation which would allow Members who would otherwise be unable to attend, to have some role in a meeting. There would also be benefit to officers and members of the public although the position of members, as the decision-makers, is different.

In approving the resolution of 30 March there had been an assumption by some that this incorporated the ability to include virtual access. At the Finance, Governance and Asset Management Committee on 21 June it was suggested that the Council clarify its intention and if it wishes to allow virtual participation that this be confirmed subject to the following in order to comply with the current legal position:

1. Those attending remotely are “in attendance” and are unable to chair, propose or second any action or to vote.
2. Only those attending “in-person” count towards the quorum.

6. **Section 85(1) Local Government Act 1972**

In law Members are required to attend a meeting of the council, in person at least once during a six-month period, unless the council approves a resolution otherwise. Virtual attendance does not qualify as attending a meeting.

During the pandemic until 7 May the Council’s only in-person meetings were those of full council and some working parties; this gave members few opportunities to attend in person and those opportunities were affected too by illness in some cases. Until in-person meetings recommenced the council had a policy allowing for a general waiving of the six-month rule for this reason although as a matter of good practice it did review all instances where the rule was waived.

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**AGENDA**

We have now moved to the next stage of the pandemic and the previous general exemption is no longer required; the Council will now need to consider each case where members are unable to attend in person as required under the Act.

Council is requested to consider waiving the requirements of s85 (1) of the Local Government Act 1985 for Councillors Andrew Coveney, Rob Maddison and Ulrike Rowbottom for the period to 28 December 2022.

**7. Community Committee**

To receive and consider the draft minutes of the meeting held on [7 June 2022](#).

**8. Finance, Governance and Asset Management Committee**

To receive and consider the draft minutes of the meeting held on [21 June 2022](#).

**9. Mayor's Announcements**

To note the list of the Mayor's Engagements, which can be found [here](#).

**10. Oxfordshire County Council**

To receive and consider a report on the work of the County Council, Cllr Fawcett.

**11. Vale of White Horse District Council**

To receive and consider a report on the work of the District Council.

**12. Completion and Approval of Annual Governance Statement**

To complete and approve the Annual Governance Statement 2021-22 as per the Deputy Town Clerk / RFO's [report](#) and [Appendix A](#).

**13. Approval of Annual Return and Financial Statements**

The Council is requested to approve the [report](#) of the Deputy Town Clerk / RFO, the Annual Return for the year ended 31 March 2022 and the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2022. [Appendix A](#) and [Appendix B](#).

**14. Calendar of meetings**

Following further discussion at the Finance, Governance and Asset Management Committee on 21 June 2022 please now see [draft calendar of meetings](#) for 2022-23 for consideration and approval by the Council.

15. **Appointment of Responsible Financial Officer**

Susan Whipp is the Council's Responsible Financial Officer, in accordance with section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972, having been appointed to this role on 24 June 2015, having previously acted as Treasurer. Mrs Whipp leaves the Council on 30 June.

The Act requires that every local authority shall make arrangements for the proper administration of their financial affairs and shall secure that one of their officers has responsibility for the administration of those affairs. The Act requires that an officer, i.e. a paid member of staff, performs this role.

Members are requested to appoint Nigel Warner, the Town Clerk, as Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) with effect from 1 July 2022. Mr Warner was previously RFO for the Council from 2000 to 2015 and of Witney Town Council from 1995 to 2000. The role will not affect remuneration.

16. **Government Response to Standards in Public Life**

To note the above [correspondence](#).

17. **Code of Conduct**

- i) To consider the adoption of the [Model Code of Conduct](#) of the District Council. Members may wish to note the Code at this stage and then formally adopt at the Council meeting on 3 August.
- ii) The District Council will be offering training on the Code of Conduct on the following dates, Thursday 15 September 19.00, Wednesday 28 September 19.00

*(The training will take place online the link is available from the office).*

18. **Motions under Standing Order 8**

19. **Thames Water – Water resource planning**

Following the consultation on water resource planning undertaken by Water Resources Southeast (WRSE) earlier this year, Thames Water suggest a meeting with town councillors to update them on progress since the consultation and to hear views and any concerns that there may be on water resources planning in Oxfordshire and the wider Thames Water area. The main points of the meeting can be found [here](#).

The following dates have been suggested by Thames Water, 11 July from 3pm; 19 July afternoon or 21 July afternoon.

20. **Future Agenda items**

To consider and propose items for future agendas.

21. **Dates of future meetings**

- 3 August 2022
- 5 October 2022
- 7 December 2022
- 25 January 2023
- 22 March 2023

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. **Full Council meeting.**

To receive and consider the draft confidential appendix to the minutes of the meeting of the Full Council on 30 March 2022

These can be found in the confidential section of SharePoint