



## Abingdon-on-Thames Town Council

Royse Court Offices, Bridge Street, Abingdon, OX14 3HU

Telephone: 01235 522642

Email: [enquiries@abingdon.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@abingdon.gov.uk)

Website: [www.abingdon.gov.uk](http://www.abingdon.gov.uk)

# ABINGDON-ON-THAMES TOWN COUNCIL

Wednesday 22 March 2023

## Minutes

### Present:

Cllr Andy Foulsham

Mayor

Cllr Gabby Barody

Deputy Mayor

Cllr Samantha Bowring

Cllr Cheryl Briggs

Cllr Grace Clifton

Cllr Margaret Crick

Cllr Neil Fawcett

Cllr Jim Halliday

Cllr Pat Lonergan

Cllr Lorraine Oates

Cllr Helen Pighills

Cllr Andrew Skinner

### In attendance:

Revd Kath Cooke

Andy Crick

Paula Lopez

Nigel Luker

Democratic Services Officer (clerk to the meeting)

Locum Deputy Town Clerk

Honorary Mace Bearer

### In attendance online:

Cllr Rawda Jehanli

### T107/22 Prayers

Prayers were led before the start of the meeting by Revd. Kath Cooke.

### T108/22 Public participation

There was none.

T1109/22 **Apologies**

Apologies were received from Cllr Eric de la Harpe and Cllr Ulrike Rowbottom.

Cllr Andrew Coveney, Cllr Alex Greenaway and Cllr Rob Maddison did not attend the meeting.

T1110/22 **Declarations of interest**

Re item T115/22, Cllr Jim Halliday has a property near to Abbey Grounds.

Re item T124/22, Cllr Grace Clifton is a trustee of Abingdon Learning Trust.

T1111/22 **Minutes**

It was **proposed** by Cllr Foulsham, **seconded** by Cllr Barody and **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting of the town council of 25 January 2023 be signed by the Chair as a correct record.

T1112/22 **Mayor's announcements**

The list of the Mayor's Engagements were reviewed. The Mayor noted the success of the Clubs and Societies Day, which was the first such event to be held since 2019 and which welcomed many visitors and groups. Town council staff were thanked for their work in organising and running the day.

The Mayor congratulated the Climate Emergency Centre on its event to mark the granting of a new five year lease.

Finally, the Mayor thanked councillors for their service in the current council and wished everyone good luck for the future.

T1113/22 **Oxfordshire County Council**

The town council considered a report on the work of the County Council from Abingdon County Councillor Alison Rooke, who gave her apologies. The report was received.

T1114/22 **Vale of White Horse District Council**

The town council considered updates on the work of the District Council.

The Mayor noted that Cllr Margaret Crick has been Mayor of the Vale of White Horse District Council for the past four years and expressed his appreciation for her time on the district council. The meeting applauded her efforts. Cllr Crick noted

**Abingdon-on-Thames Town Council, Wednesday 22 March 2023  
Minutes**

that the role had been challenging but she had enjoyed it, in particular meeting residents in communities across the district.

**T115/22 Community Committee**

It was **proposed** by Cllr Fawcett, **seconded** by Cllr Lonergan and **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Community Committee meeting held on 7 February 2023 were **RECEIVED**.

Cllr Halliday asked if residents near to Abbey Meadow could be informed in writing of plans for all events in the area, including road closures.

**T116/22 Environment and Amenities Committee**

It was **proposed** by Cllr Barody, **seconded** by Cllr Halliday and **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Environment and Amenities Committee meeting held on 21 February 2023 were **RECEIVED**.

**T117/22 Town Infrastructure Committee**

It was **proposed** by Cllr Skinner, **seconded** by Cllr Clifton and **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Town Infrastructure Committee meetings held on 9 March 2023 were **RECEIVED**.

It was noted that a 20mph zone working group would meet on 30 March 2023.

**T118/22 Finance, Governance and Asset Management Committee**

The minutes were not available for the meeting and would be deferred to the next meeting.

**T119/22 Town council documents**

The town council was asked to approve and adopt the standing orders, terms of reference, financial regulations and the financial risk assessment/strategic risk assessment to ensure compliance with the audit process.

Members were asked to send any comments on the standing orders to the Deputy Town Clerk to enable them to be reviewed and updated early in the new council.

It was **proposed** by Cllr Bowring, **seconded** by Cllr Halliday and **AGREED** that the documents be approved and adopted.

## T120/22 Town Clerk

The town council noted the resignation of the Town Clerk, Alan Rouse.

It was **proposed** by Cllr Halliday, **seconded** by Cllr Crick and **AGREED** to approve the recommendation from the Finance, Governance and Asset Management Committee to appoint the locum Deputy Town Clerk, Paula Lopez, to the role of Town Clerk/Chief Executive for a period of 12 months.

## T121/22 Election of Mayor

1. The town council reviewed the convention which guides the selection of the Abingdon Mayor. The convention which has been followed in recent years is as follows:

- Normally, there is a Mayor elected each Municipal Year and an individual is only elected for one term.
- The person nominated for Mayor is usually the longest serving councillor who has not yet been Mayor.
- When several members are elected at the same time, they are put into order of seniority based on the percentage of votes they received of the total votes cast in their ward in the election. The higher the percentage, the further up the order they are.
- The second in line to be Mayor is normally elected as Deputy Mayor so that on election each Mayor has served one year as the Deputy Mayor immediately prior to their Mayoral year.
- If part way through the year, a Deputy Mayor decides that they do not wish to be Mayor, they should give as much notice as possible so that the next in line using the above formula can take over as Deputy Mayor and gain appropriate experience.
- Councillors are offered the role of Mayor in their appointed year. If they decline, the opportunity passes to the next councillor. There is no opportunity to become Mayor at a later date and the role cannot be deferred.
- Councillors who return after a period out of office will be placed ahead of new councillors, with the number of years previously served deciding the order of precedence of the returners.

It was **proposed** by Cllr Halliday, **seconded** by Cllr Lonergan and **AGREED** to amend bullet point 2 by replacing 'longest serving' with 'most senior'.

It was **proposed** by Cllr Halliday, **seconded** by Cllr Barody and **AGREED** to amend bullet point 3 by replacing 'total votes cast' with 'electorate'.

It was **proposed** by Cllr Halliday, **seconded** by Cllr Bowring and **AGREED** to amend bullet point 6 to: 'Councillors are offered the role of Mayor in their appointed

**Abingdon-on-Thames Town Council, Wednesday 22 March 2023  
Minutes**

year. If they decline, the opportunity usually passes to the next councillor and there is not usually an opportunity to become Mayor at a later date'.

2. To receive nominations for the role of Mayor-elect for the Municipal Year 2023-24.

The nomination would be for 'Mayor-select' as this is contingent on the forthcoming elections. Cllr Barody was proposed by Cllr Halliday and seconded by Cllr Bowring. Cllr Barody accepted the nomination with a review when the time comes for the election of the Mayor. The nomination was not voted on.

3. To receive nominations for the role of Deputy Mayor-elect for the Municipal Year 2023-24.

Cllr Andrew Skinner was proposed by Cllr Lonergan and seconded by Cllr Pighills. The nomination was not voted on.

**T122/22 Calendar of meetings 2023-24**

It was **proposed** by Cllr Lonergan, **seconded** by Cllr Barody and **AGREED** to adopt the calendar of meetings for 2023-24.

**T123/22 Schools biodiversity competition 2022-3**

The winners of the biodiversity competition for schools held in 2022 were announced. The competition was judged by the Chair of the Environment and Amenities Committee, Cllr Gabby Barody, and John Killick.

Winner:	Cothill House School
Second:	John Mason School
Joint third:	Rush Common and Fitzharrys School

Prizes will be awarded at the Mayor-making meeting on 15 May 2023.

**T124/22 Motions under standing order 8**

The following motion was **proposed** by Cllr Halliday, **seconded** by Cllr Grace Clifton and **AGREED**:

Abingdon Town Council notes that the town is the "oldest town in Britain in continuous settlement" and has a wealth of historic buildings (including the iconic County Hall and the Abbey Buildings), but that travellers using the A34 will be largely unaware of these facts.

The council therefore resolves to ask the Town Clerk to write to the Chief Executive of National Highways requesting that his staff work with the town council to install

**Abingdon-on-Thames Town Council, Wednesday 22 March 2023  
Minutes**

brown tourist information signs to highlight the attractions of Abingdon to both northbound and southbound traffic on the A34, and to ensure that this letter is copied to the town's Member of Parliament, Layla Moran.

**T125/22 Dates of future meetings**

The dates of future meetings were noted:

- 15 May 2023 – Annual meeting/Mayor Making
- 28 June 2023

**T126/22 Exclusion of the Public, including the Press**

The Mayor **moved**, Cllr Barody **seconded** and it was **AGREED** 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)**

**T127/22 Bank account**

The town council received a report from the Responsible Finance Officer and the resolution was approved.

The meeting closed at 8.10pm.