



Abingdon-on-Thames Town Council

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Environment, Amenities and Infrastructure committee

Monday 9 February 2026, 7pm

Old Magistrates' Court, Guildhall

These are draft minutes, subject to the approval of the committee and they may therefore change

Present:

Cllr Gabby Barody

Cllr Elio Astone

Cllr Mark Giddins

Cllr Tom Greenaway

Cllr Colin Sanderson

Cllr Jim Halliday

Lucille Savin

Chair

Vice-Chair

Chair of the Finance, Governance & Asset Management
Committee – ex-officio

co-opted non-councillor member

In attendance:

Tim Badcock

Nicky Cayley

Cemeteries and Outdoor Services Manager

Deputy Town Clerk

1 Member of the Public

SECTION I - Open to the public and media

E49/25 **Apologies**

Apologies for their absence were received from Cllr Maragaret Crick and Cllr Leo Midwinter.

E50/25 **Declarations of interest**

None.

E51/25 **Public participation**

The member of the public did not wish to address the Committee.

E52/25 **Minutes**

Cllr Halliday noted that there was an inaccuracy in minute 37/25 concerning cemetery charges and proposed the deletion of the words “after a number of years in which they had been frozen”.

It was **proposed** by Cllr Giddins, **seconded** by Cllr Sanderson and **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting of the Environment, Amenities and Infrastructure committee of 17 November 2025 be confirmed as an accurate record of the meeting, to be signed by the Chair, with the following amendment:-

Minute 37/25 – Paragraph 4 – deletion of “after a number of years in which they had been frozen”.

E53/25 **Finance Report**

The committee considered a report from the RFO on the management accounts to 31 December 2025, including committee management accounts as at 31 December 2025, and summary committee management accounts as at 31 December 2025.

It was **proposed** by Cllr Astone, **seconded** by Cllr Halliday and **RESOLVED** to accept the management accounts.

E54/25 **Green forum**

The committee received and considered the written report of Lucille Savin on the work of the Green Forum. The committee invited comments from Ms Savin.

Key points noted:

- Global justice and environmental themes were being explored through talks and exhibitions.
- Repair cafés were now held consistently on the first Saturday of each month and had increased attendance.
- The Plastics Group had developed a quiz now being trialled in the CEC and local eco-clubs, including a successful primary school pilot.
- Active travel events had been well received.
- Discussions were ongoing with the Vale regarding additional tree planting near the splash park, with consideration of suitable species and protection measures.
- Wellbeing events, including festive gatherings and a New Year drop-in, had been positively received.
- Planning was underway for Clubs and Societies Day and a winter exhibition.

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A question was raised regarding proposed tree planting and UV protection near the splash park. It was confirmed that the Vale's Tree Officer was considering appropriate species that would minimise maintenance issues, and that no existing trees would be removed.

The Chair thanked Ms Savin for a comprehensive and informative report.

E55/25 Report from the Cemeteries and Outdoor Services Manager

The committee received and noted the report on works undertaken by the Outdoor Services Team.

Key updates included:

- Installation of the Market Square noticeboard, now fully in use with positive public feedback.
- Replacement of failing wooden handrails on Ock Valley Walk bridge (Town Council-managed section) with recycled plastic for longevity.
- Bus shelter installations delayed (to 13 and 14 February) due to revised traffic management requirements; new shelters to be installed on Stratton Way.
- Transfer of responsibility for several bus shelters to the Town Council completed, with cleaning now underway.

Comments and questions covered:

- Clarification of bridge ownership boundaries on Oak Valley Walk.
- Long-term concerns regarding ageing footbridge infrastructure owned by other authorities.
- Completion of the Chilton Close container and weather-related urgency of putting in shelving – COSM was asked to prioritise this.
- Branding of new bus shelters to reflect Town Council ownership.
- Inclusion of photographs in future reports to better demonstrate completed works.

Members thanked the COSM and team for their continued work. Cllr Giddins requested that thanks be recorded in particular for the transfer of the bus shelters from the northern development to the Town Council, as this had been instigated by the COSM. They had now been cleaned by the team and were looking much better.

E56/25 Play Areas Improvement Update

The Committee received a detailed report on play area improvements.

It was noted that previously agreed equipment installations had been completed.

A large play unit originally planned for Box Hill could not be accommodated without reconfiguration.

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It was therefore proposed to remove an underused climbing frame unit and replace it with more engaging equipment. - a large "Citadel Castle" climbing unit.

Caldecott Recreation Ground would have a smaller climbing frame removed and a new piece of equipment installed.

The Committee discussed funding both the Boxhill and Caldecott play equipment improvements from the Earmarked Reserve (EMR), which currently held sufficient funds. This would mean that the order(s) could be placed without delay. The choice of kit for Caldecott would be delegated to the COSM and Chair.

It was **proposed** by Cllr Halliday, **seconded** by Cllr Giddins and **RESOLVED** to proceed with the procurement of a multiplay unit for Boxhill and a piece of equipment (to be delegated to the COSM and the Chair for Caldecott Recreation Ground funded from the EMR.

E57/25 **Single Use Plastics**

The Committee received and considered a report on a revised proposal for a single use plastic (SUP) policy for the town, relating to stall holders in the marketplace and vendors at outdoor events.

There followed an in-depth discussion which highlighted the need for an evidence-based approach via an initial audit of current plastic use; engagement with traders on a voluntary, phased basis; and recognition that some plastic use may be unavoidable due to health and safety requirements. It was important to align with national legislation and best practice. Members also stressed the importance of clear metrics at the beginning to assess progress and success of any policy.

It was **proposed** by Cllr Halliday and **seconded** by Cllr Sanderson to note the report and it was **RESOLVED** to proceed with parts A (current situation and audit) and B (engagement and voluntary transitional period), with a further report at the June meeting with audit findings and recommendations on progressing to Phase 2, including defined exemptions, to be brought to the next Committee meeting.

E58/25 **Public Art Working Party**

The committee received and considered a report from the Project Manager: Business and Community Engagement regarding proposals for town boundary signage and related public art. The original proposal to refurbish the underpass using the Public Art Funding (S106 held by the District Council) had been turned down – Cllr Sanderson advised that this was due to it being a refurbishment project rather than a new installation.

The Public Art Working Group had therefore agreed that the focus should shift to town signage (at entry points) which was a more manageable project with a higher likelihood of approval. The Officer was therefore requesting approval to apply for the S106 funding for the project.

It was **proposed** by the Chair, **seconded** by Cllr Giddins and **RESOLVED** to approve progressing funding applications for boundary signage and to refer detailed design, refurbishment options, and anti-graffiti measures back to the Working Party for further development and to report back to the next meeting of the Committee.

E59/25 **Biodiversity Competition**

The Committee noted plans to relaunch the “Patch for the Planet” biodiversity initiative, encouraging schools, community groups and individuals to improve biodiversity in a defined area. Monetary prizes were confirmed for community and school categories. Prize giving would be aligned with a suitable civic event – if this was Mayor Making then the judging arrangements would include the Mayor and Deputy Mayor,

E60/25 **Publicity**

A request was made for the COSM to include photos of recent projects in the next edition of the Town Crier.

E61/25 **Forward Plan**

The forward plan had been reviewed by the Chair and Officers, and this had been updated.

E62/25 **Actions Register**

The actions register was reviewed and updated.

E63/25 **Future Agenda items**

- Public art (town signage)
- Bus shelter maintenance report
- Bus usage figures – this is to be a standing agenda item
- SIDs data
- Single use plastic policy
- Town Lighting

E64/25 **Dates of future meetings**

8 June 2026

The meeting closed at 8.29pm

Signed: _____

Date: _____