

# Council Agenda



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Date: 3 December 2013  
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## Summons to attend a meeting of Council

to be held on Wednesday 11 December 2013 at 7.00 pm  
Guildhall, Abingdon

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M Reed', is written in a cursive style.

Margaret Reed  
Head of Legal and Democratic Services

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# Agenda

## Open to the public including the press

### Map and vision

(Page 8)

A map showing the location of the venue for this meeting is attached. A link to information about nearby car parking is

[http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/transport/car\\_parking/default.asp](http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/transport/car_parking/default.asp)

The council's vision is to take care of your interests across the Vale with enterprise, energy and efficiency.

### 1. Apologies for absence

To receive apologies for absence.

### 2. Minutes

(Pages 9 - 21)

To adopt and sign as a correct record the Council minutes of the meeting held on 23 October 2013 (previously published).

### 3. Declarations of interest

To receive any declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests in respect of items on the agenda for this meeting.

### 4. Chairman's announcements

To receive any announcements from the chairman.

### 5. Statements, petitions and questions from the public relating to matters affecting council.

Any statements, petitions and questions from the public under standing order 32 will be made or presented at the meeting.

### 6. Urgent business

To receive notification of any matters which the chairman determines should be considered as urgent business and the special circumstances which have made the matters urgent.

## **7. Petitions under standing order 13**

To receive petitions from members of the council under standing order 13 (if any).

## **8. Questions under standing order 12**

To receive questions from members of the council under standing order 12.

1. Question from Councillor Gervase Duffield to the Leader of council, Councillor Matthew Barber

What effects if any will the sale by Lloyds Bank to Aberdeen Asset Management of parts of their Scottish Widows cluster (ie, the Investment Partnership) have on central Abingdon precinct developments, and will Lloyds discuss with the Council's investment managers any further sales from the cluster which might affect central Abingdon development?

2. Question from Councillor Andrew Skinner to the Leader of council, Councillor Matthew Barber

Will the Leader agree that to reduce the benefits under the Council Tax Reduction Scheme for some of the most vulnerable people in the Vale in order to save less than £20,000 per annum is something which should be avoided at all costs ?

3. Question from Councillor Jenny Hannaby to the Leader of council, Councillor Matthew Barber

Please can he outline the timetable for improving the road network in the Wantage Grove area, which, as he is aware, is about to see construction of a large number of new houses and also outline how he expects these vital road improvement to be paid for?

4. Question from Councillor Bob Johnston to the Leader of council, Councillor Matthew Barber

Has the Leader been approached by the Leader of the County Council on the subject of railway electrification, as he seeks an appropriate financial contribution from the Vale to expedite the project in a similar way to that of the East/West Railway?

5. Question from Councillor Catherine Webber to the Leader of council, Councillor Matthew Barber

Is the Leader aware that the Abingdon Arts Festival will not now be happening next year, or for the foreseeable future, purely as a result of his own policies on revenue grants?

6. Question from Councillor Debby Hallett to the Leader of council, Councillor Matthew Barber

In recent months, the major issues affecting this Council have been the proposed move to Crowmarsh, and the future development of Westway, Botley. These issues are

ongoing and both have serious implications for the reputation of the Council. The common thread that runs through both these issues, is the feeling that there has been little or inadequate consultation with the public and that their views are being ignored. Please would the Leader comment on this?

7. Question from Councillor Jim Halliday to the Leader of council, Councillor Matthew Barber

Please could the Leader list a) the sum allocated for the festival grants budget in FY 2012/13 and FY 2013/14, b) list all festival grants actually paid out in FY 2012/13 and to date in FY 2013/14 - giving in each case the sum paid, the name of the Festival and the date the grant was paid ?

8. Question from Councillor Pat Lonergan to the Leader of council, Councillor Matthew Barber

Does the Leader share the frustration of Abingdon councillors about the length of time that it is taking to fill empty units in the Bury Street development and the view that Scottish Widows are being very picky about who they are allowing to rent shops ?

9. Question from Councillor Richard Webber to the Leader of council, Councillor Matthew Barber

As the overwhelming majority of questions are being addressed to the Leader, is he aware that the reason for this is that he is perceived to be in charge of finance, grants, major planning, and property issues amongst other responsibilities and hence all decision-making is directly and solely in his hands?

## **9. Recommendations from Cabinet, individual Cabinet members, and committees**

To consider the following recommendations from Cabinet, individual Cabinet members, or committees since the last Council meeting.

### **A. Delivering Accelerated Housing Growth in Science Vale, Southern Oxfordshire**

Cabinet, at its meeting on 6 December 2013, will consider a report to approve a project that will accelerate housing growth across the Science Vale area of South and Vale and ask that both Councils establish budgets to allow the project to proceed.

**The report of the Strategic Director, which Cabinet will consider on 6 December, was circulated to all councillors. Please bring this report to the meeting.**

**The recommendations of Cabinet will be circulated to councillors prior to the Council meeting.**

### **B. Council tax reduction scheme 2014/15**

Cabinet, at its meeting on 6 December 2013, will consider a report on a council tax reduction scheme for 2014/15.

**The report of the Head of Finance, which Cabinet will consider on 5 December, was circulated to all councillors. Please bring this report to the meeting.**

**The recommendations of Cabinet will be circulated to councillors on Friday 6 December.**

### **C. Council tax base 2014/15**

Cabinet, at its meeting on 6 December 2013, will consider a report on the council tax base for 2014/15.

**The report of the Head of Finance, which Cabinet will consider on 6 December, was circulated to all councillors. Please bring this report to the meeting.**

**The recommendations of Cabinet will be circulated to councillors prior to the Council meeting.**

### **C. Council tax reduction scheme grant for town and parish councils**

Cabinet, at its meeting on 6 December 2013, will consider a report on the distribution of the council tax reduction scheme grant to parish and town councils.

**The report of the Head of Finance, which Cabinet will consider on 5 December, was circulated to all councillors. Please bring this report to the meeting.**

**The recommendations of Cabinet will be circulated to councillors on Friday 6 December.**

## **10. Councillors' allowances scheme**

**(Pages 22 - 24)**

To consider the report of the Independent Remuneration Panel.

## **11. Review of the council's constitution**

**(Pages 25 - 35)**

To consider the report of the Head of Legal and Democratic Services on proposed changes to the council's constitution (**attached**).

## **12. Petition debate - West Way Botley**

A petition has been handed in objection to the current proposals for the redevelopment of the West Way shopping centre and the surrounding area on the grounds that the proposed uses, scale and character of development are entirely inappropriate for the local community. The full wording of the petition is set out below:

"We the undersigned petition the council to Not allow the current plans for redevelopment of the West Way shopping centre and the surrounding area to proceed and to reopen discussion with the community on a smaller scale redevelopment, in line with the ideas put forward by the Council for consultation in 2012.

We the undersigned object to the current proposals for redevelopment of the West Way shopping centre and the surrounding area on the grounds that the proposed uses, scale and character of development are entirely inappropriate for the local community.

We urge Vale of White Horse District Council not to allow these plans to proceed and to reopen discussion with the community in discussion on a smaller scale redevelopment, in line with the ideas put forward by the Council for consultation in 2012”.

The petition has both hard copy (in excess of 660) and e-petition signatures (75 at the time of publication of this agenda) in support of it.

The council’s Petition Scheme states the following regarding petition debates at Council meetings:

When petitions containing more than 500 signatures are submitted, the petition organiser will be given five minutes to present the petition and the petition will then be discussed by councillors. Council will decide how to respond to the petition at this meeting.

In response to a petition, Council may decide to

- take the action the petition requests;
- not to take the action requested for reasons put forward in the debate;
- to commission further investigation into the matter, for example by a relevant committee;
- make recommendations to Cabinet, where the issue is one on which the Cabinet is required to make the final decision.

Any Council recommendation will be reported to Cabinet as the body responsible for this issue.

### **13. Report of the Leader of the council**

#### **(1) Urgent cabinet decisions**

In accordance with the overview and scrutiny procedure rules, a cabinet decision can be taken as a matter of urgency, if any delay by the call-in process would seriously prejudice the council’s or the public’s interest. Treating the decision as a matter of urgency must be agreed by the chairman of the Scrutiny Committee and must be reported to the next meeting of the council, together with the reasons for urgency.

To receive any details of urgent cabinet decisions taken since the last ordinary meeting of the council, (if any).

#### **(2) Delegation of cabinet functions**

To receive details of any changes to the leader’s scheme of delegation.

#### **(3) Matters affecting the authority arising from meetings of joint committees, partnerships and other meetings**

To receive the report of the leader (if any).

## **14. Notices of motion under standing order 11**

To receive notices of motion under standing order 11.

1. Motion to be proposed by Councillor Gervase Duffield, seconder to be confirmed:

“That this Council welcomes Ofwat’s rejection of the recent Thames Water price increase application, and hopes that Ofwat will be specially vigilant on large applications costing vast sums where these can be undercut by reliable cheaper methods”.

2. Motion to be proposed by Councillor Ron Mansfield, seconded by Councillor Tony de Vere

“Council urges the Cabinet to include appropriate sums for maintenance in its proposed capital budget for 2014/15 and subsequent years to permit the Abbey Meadows Swimming Pool to remain open so that Vale residents can continue enjoy this facility”.

3. Motion to be proposed by Councillor Jim Halliday, seconded by Councillor Julie Mayhew-Archer

“Council urges the Cabinet to allow any monies unspent (as at 31 March 2014) by the four Area Committees - both for Capital Grants and New Homes Bonus Grants - to be carried forward to the next financial year and added to any new allocations that be awarded to the given Area Committee during the 2014/15 budget round”.

4. Motion to be proposed by Councillor Dudley Hoddinott, seconded by Councillor Jenny Hannaby

“Council urges the Cabinet to include an appropriate sum in its proposed revenue budget for 2014/15 to allow for the community revenue grants scheme to be re-established in order that community groups and organisations may continue to promote the vitality of the District and the well-being of the community”.