

ANNUAL TOWN MEETING 2025

Recommendation:

The Full Council determines the broad format and arrangements for next year's Annual Town Meeting to allow sufficient time to promote and organise the event effectively

The Annual Town Meeting is intended to be a meeting of residents facilitated by the Town Council.

It is a legal requirement and must be held between 1 March and 1 June

The Town Council has already selected the evening of Wednesday, 26 March 2024 for this event.

The meeting is presently organised and co-ordinated by the Meetings Officer with the support of several other colleagues.

The reach and attendance of the Annual Town Meeting has grown from 0 in-person attendance in 2022 to around 60 in 2024, with an estimated reach of 1000 through live broadcast in 2024 (the first time this was done)

The following decisions have been critical to this growth

- Giving the floor to residents, as opposed to making a series of presentations from the front
- A central accessible venue with refreshments provided
- The use of an independent facilitator, including clear meeting protocols to promote civility and respect
- The use of a particular seating arrangement advised by facilitator to encourage inclusion and participation
- Advance publicity in print, online and through local broadcast media
- Live broadcasting of the event on Facebook, including taking questions live, in partnership with Wallingford Radio

- Structuring the agenda around the strategic themes, ensuring rounded content and that no one issue (or interest group) dominates
- A date which does not fall in the school holidays
- The notes and recording being published on the Town Council website within 5 working days of the meeting

Luke Whitcomb,
Meetings Officer
18 November 2024