

Ab.13

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE ABINGDON AREA COMMITTEE

HELD AT THE NORTHCOURT CENTRE,
ABINGDON ON TUESDAY, 11TH
OCTOBER, 2005 AT 7.00PM

Open to the Public, including the Press

PRESENT:

MEMBERS: Councillor Julie Mayhew-Archer (Chair), Janet Morgan (Vice-Chair), Paul Bizzell, Mary de Vere, Tony de Vere, Peter Green, Jim Halliday, Alison Rooke, Roz Smith and Laurel Symons

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE: Lorna Edwards, Toby Warren and Steve Culliford

NUMBER OF MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC: Nil

Ab.14 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Michael Badcock, Gervase Duffield, Richard Gibson and Peter Jones.

Ab.15 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 13 July 2005 were adopted and signed as a correct record, subject to:

- The word 'to' being deleted from the last line in paragraph 3 of minute Ab.7 relating to 'Statements and Petitions from the Public'
- The figure £8,231 being amended to £8,231.88 in resolution (f) relating to the Community Grant to the Peachcroft Christian Centre

Ab.16 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Alison Rooke declared a personal interest in the community grants application from the Abingdon Performing Arts Group (APAGE), as she was a member of the connected Abingdon Operatic Society and was President of the Abingdon Drama Club, in her capacity as Town Mayor (minute Ab.22). Councillors Tony de Vere, Julie Mayhew-Archer and Laurel Symons all declared personal interests in the community grants application from the Abingdon Performing Arts Group (APAGE), as they knew its representative in attendance at the meeting to address the Committee (minute Ab.22). Councillors Peter Green, Julie Mayhew-Archer and Alison Rooke all declared personal and prejudicial interests in the item relating to the twinning service level agreement with Abingdon Town Council (minute Ab.19).

Ab.17 URGENT BUSINESS AND CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chair accepted one item as a matter of urgent business in order that it did not have to be deferred until the next meeting of the Committee in 2006. This related to a community grant application from the Abingdon and District Musical Society.

The Chair announced that Councillor Grahame Ash had resigned from the Council. The Chair asked that the Committee's thanks were recorded for his work over the past few years.

The Chair re-arranged the order items were considered at the meeting but in accordance with standard practice, the minutes are recorded here in the agenda order.

Ab.18 STATEMENTS AND PETITIONS FROM THE PUBLIC UNDER STANDING ORDER 32

Malcolm Ross made a statement on behalf of the Abingdon Performing Arts Group (APAGE), in support of the Community Grants application before the Committee. He started by thanking the Committee for its support in the past. The Group was trying to involve more people in its 9th Arts Festival by producing a brochure to be distributed to every household in the town and surrounding villages. This would cost £5,000 for 24,000 copies. The Group would be holding jazz workshops for young people as part of the festival.

The Chair thanked Mr Ross for his statement.

Ab.19 SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENT WITH ABINGDON TOWN COUNCIL

(Councillors Julie Mayhew-Archer (Chair), Peter Green and Alison Rooke all declared personal and prejudicial interests in this item and in accordance with Standing Order 34, they left the room during its consideration. Councillor Jim Halliday (Vice-Chair) took the Chair for this item.)

The Committee received and considered report 139/05 of the Head of Innovation and Enterprise regarding the proposed twinning service level agreement with Abingdon Town Council. The Committee had called for the report at its last meeting when concerns were expressed at the potential for overlap with the activities of the Abingdon and District Twin Towns Society.

The two-year service level agreement had been drafted by the officers and discussed with the Town Council. It specified a £2,500 grant from the Vale to support the Town Council's promotion of cultural, educational, social and business links with the community of Abingdon and its twin towns: Argentan (France), Schongau (Germany) and Lucca (Italy). Promotion of civic links was not included in the grant. It was noted that the grant was not to be used for travelling costs for twinning visits but exceptions could be made for children and young people in full-time education. The Vale's support had to be acknowledged in all relevant publicity. The Town Council was also required to provide an annual report on its activities over the past year and its plans for the forthcoming year. Finally, the Town Council was required to work in partnership with the Abingdon and District Twin Towns Society and other local societies to develop community twinning and avoid duplication.

Members noted that an annual report had not been received from the Town Council. This was required to establish how the grant was spent last year and how it would be spent next year. The Committee delegated authority to ensure that the work of the Town Council and the Twin Towns Society were complementary and that a report was submitted by the Town Council to ensure the grant was being used effectively. The delegation was in consultation with the Vice-Chair, as the Chair had declared a personal and prejudicial interest on this item.

RESOLVED

that authority be delegated to the Head of Innovation and Enterprise in consultation with the Vice-Chair of the Committee to ensure:

- (i) that the service level agreements with Abingdon Town Council and the Abingdon and District Twin Towns Society are complementary; and*
- (ii) that the agreement with the Town Council is subject to the receipt of an annual report from the Town Council, detailing how it has spent the grant during the past year and setting out how it will be spent in the forthcoming year, and a statement from the Town*

Council specifying its role distinct from that of the Abingdon and District Twin Towns Society.

Ab.20 TARGETING GRANTS FOR THE BENEFIT OF ABINGDON AREA

The Committee received and considered report 140/05 of the Head of Innovation and Enterprise. At the last meeting, Members considered that a prospectus should be drafted, setting out the Committee's priorities in giving support to the local community. This would also guide potential applicants on which schemes might receive support.

Members noted that the Council was working in partnership with the County Council and other Oxfordshire District Councils to produce a Local Area Agreement. The Agreement was intended to encourage better partnership working to achieve local priorities. Members recognised that the nature of Government funding was changing and would only be available for schemes that supported these priorities. A first draft prospectus was appended to the report for the Committee's consideration. This took into account the priorities being worked on for inclusion in the Local Area Agreement and the priorities in the current Vale Community Strategy.

Members suggested that the prospectus should make it clear where the priorities originated from, and that financial support was more likely for groups that were prepared to support these priorities. It was also recognised that without careful wording, the prospectus could promise more than the Committee's budget was able to deliver. The Committee suggested further minor amendments for the officers to take into account in the next draft. It was noted that Abingdon Area was the pilot area for a prospectus and this would be rolled out to other Area Committees in due course.

Members discussed the possibility of another meeting of the Abingdon Area Forum to look at priorities. Members of the County Council and Town and Parish Councils could be invited also. However, consideration of this suggestion was deferred until the next Committee meeting.

RESOLVED

- (a) that the report be received and the officers take into account the suggestions made in preparing the second draft prospectus; and*
- (b) that consideration of holding a further Abingdon Area Forum to discuss priorities be deferred until the next meeting of the Committee.*

Ab.21 ABINGDON INTEGRATED TRANSPORT STRATEGY – PROGRESS UP-DATE

The Committee received a briefing note setting out progress on the Abingdon Integrated Transport Strategy. This detailed the works in the town centre in 2005/06 and 2006/07 and the other schemes being planned and evaluated elsewhere.

RESOLVED

that the briefing note on progress with the Abingdon Integrated Transport Strategy be received.

Ab.22 COMMUNITY GRANTS

(Councillors Tony de Vere, Julie Mayhew-Archer, Alison Rooke and Laurel Symons each declared personal interests in the community grant application from the Abingdon Performing

Arts Group (APAGE) and in accordance with Standing Order 34 they remained in the meeting during its consideration.)

The Committee received and considered report 138/05 of the Strategic Director, which detailed the Committee's community grants budget position and set out details of three applications. A further briefing note was tabled at the meeting setting out the details of a further application, accepted by the Chair as a matter of urgent business, from the Abingdon and District Musical Society.

Before considering the grant applications, the Committee noted that a grant of £27 had been awarded under delegated authority towards tree maintenance at Rutherford Close, Abingdon. Members also noted that the remaining budget for the 2005/06 financial year totalled £16,520.12.

The Committee carefully considered each new application and

RESOLVED

- (a) *that it be noted that the Head of Innovation & Enterprise has exercised delegated authority in consultation with the Chair of the Committee and awarded a grant of £27 to Mrs Packard of Rutherford Close, Abingdon, towards tree maintenance;*
- (b) *that the Committee's remaining budget of £16,520.12 be noted;*
- (c) *that the following grants be awarded:*

<u>Applicant</u>	<u>Scheme</u>	<u>Grant</u>
<i>The Thatched Cottage, Appleford</i>	<i>Re-thatching</i>	<i>£250 (Environmental Agenda) (Town and Village Vitality priority) (by 7 votes to 3)</i>
<i>Abingdon Performing Arts Group (APAGE)</i>	<i>Printing and distributing the 9th Arts Festival brochure</i>	<i>£4,000 (£2,410 from last year's Economic agenda budget carried forward, and £1,590 from this year's budget: £1,000 from the Economic agenda and £590 from the Discretionary element to be categorised as Social agenda) (Town and Village Vitality priority) (by ten votes to nil)</i>
<i>Abingdon and District Musical Society</i>	<i>A series of concerts to mark the Society's Diamond Jubilee year</i>	<i>Underwrite the deficit up to £630 (Social Agenda) (Town and Village Vitality priority) (by 9 votes to 1)</i>

- (d) *that authority be delegated to the Head of Innovation and Enterprise, in consultation with the Chair of the Committee, to approve the following grant:*

<u>Applicant</u>	<u>Scheme</u>	<u>Grant</u>
<i>Gordon Hudson and Co.</i>	<i>Tree maintenance and tree safety work</i>	<i>Up to £200, subject to checking the detail of the number of trees under a Tree Preservation Order</i>

(Environmental Agenda) (Town and Village Vitality priority) (by 9 votes to 1)

- (e) *that the update on the current status of grants awarded by this Committee during 2004/05 and 2005/06, shown at Appendix B to report 138/05, be noted.*

Exempt Information Under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972

None

The meeting rose at 9.10 pm