

Ab.8

**MINUTES OF A MEETING
OF THE ABINGDON AREA COMMITTEE**

**HELD AT THE GUILDHALL, ABINGDON
ON THURSDAY, 19TH OCTOBER, 2006
AT 7.00PM**

Open to the Public, including the Press

PRESENT:

MEMBERS: Councillors Jim Halliday (Chair), Richard Webber (Vice-Chair), Mary de Vere, Tony de Vere, Gervase Duffield, Monica Lovatt, Janet Morgan, Alison Rooke and Laurel Symons.

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Nigel Warner and Marianne Milburn (Abingdon Town Council).

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE: Lorna Edwards, Jason Lindsey and Toby Warren.

NUMBER OF MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC: None.

Ab.14 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Mike Badcock, Peter Green, Peter Jones, Julie Mayhew-Archer and Roz Smith.

Ab.15 **MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 6 July 2006 were adopted and signed as a correct record.

Ab.16 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

<u>Councillor</u>	<u>Type of Interest</u>	<u>Item</u>	<u>Reason</u>	<u>Minute Ref</u>
Monica Lovatt	Personal and Prejudicial	Request for payment of twinning Service Level Agreement – Abingdon Town Council.	Member of Abingdon Town Council	Ab.20
Alison Rooke	Personal and Prejudicial	Request for payment of twinning Service Level Agreement – Abingdon Town Council.	Member of Abingdon Town Council.	Ab.20
	Personal	Grant Application – Abingdon Performance Arts Group Enterprise.	Member of Abingdon Operatic Society	Ab.20

Ab.17 URGENT BUSINESS AND CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chair reported that a copy of the Council's Grants Criteria had been circulated to each Member at the meeting for information. He asked that they be returned at the end of the meeting. One Member suggested that the Committee undertake a review of the grants awarded during the year to ascertain how many had met the Criteria and the Council's stated priorities. It was agreed that an item be included on the agenda for the next meeting in March 2007.

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

None.

Ab.19 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC UNDER STANDING ORDER 32

None.

Ab.20 COMMUNITY GRANTS

(Councillors Monica Lovatt and Alison Rooke had each declared a personal and prejudicial interest in the request for payment of the twinning Service Level Agreement by Abingdon Town Council and in accordance with Standing Order 34 they withdrew from the meeting during its consideration. Councillor Alison Rooke declared a personal interest in the application for grant aid submitted by Abingdon Performance Arts Group Enterprise (APAGE) and in accordance with Standing Order 34 she remained in the meeting during its consideration).

The Committee received and considered report 97/06 of the Strategic Director and Monitoring Officer which set out the current budget position for the Abingdon Area Committee for Community Grants in 2006/07 and invited Members to consider and determine those grant applications received since the last meeting.

Prior to consideration of the grant and request for payment applications, the Committee received a presentation from Nigel Warner (Town Clerk) and Marianne Milburn (Twinning Officer) of Abingdon Town Council on the Town Council's twinning activities during the past year, as follows:-

- Strong twinning links maintained.
- Employment of a Twinning Officer for 4 hours per week to assist individuals and groups.
- Grant awards to local groups amounting to £1,495.
- Continued close working with the Abingdon and District Twin Towns Society and the Vale of White Horse District Council.
- Attendance at a number of major twinning events, eg Annual Twin Towns Conference, Europe Day.

In response to questions, the Town Clerk advised as follows:-

- As part of the Town Council's Best Value process all groups financially supported through the twinning process would be asked to identify both the positives and negatives of their respective twinning activities.
- The Burgess Trust was a Trust Fund established by the family of Burgess Printers and administered by the Town Council, to support twinning activities for 16 – 23 year olds.

The Chair thanked the Town Clerk for his presentation.

The Committee considered Twinning Partnership grants as follows:-

(a) Abingdon Town Council

The Committee supported the continued financial support for Abingdon Town Council's twinning activities.

(b) Drayton Twinning Society

It was reported that the Society had now provided the information required in Schedules 2 and 3 of the Service Level Agreement. Referring to paragraph 5.4 of the report, it was noted that it was a jazz evening not a barn dance that had proved popular. Following an evaluation of events in 2005/06 a number of issues had been identified, as follows:-

- Cost of activities, in particular hosting arrangements.
- Lack of interest from the village to supporting twinning events.
- Twinning activities organised by a small number of families.

The Committee stressed the need for the profile of the Group to be raised locally to encourage more families and organisations to participate in the twinning activities.

The Committee considered the grant application, as follows:-

Abingdon Performance Arts Group Enterprise

It was reported that Abingdon Town Council had awarded a grant of £250 and the Co-op £500. It was noted that the theme of the 2007 Abingdon Arts Festival was young people and working in partnership with local schools. Two schools had already expressed an interest in participating. One Member asked whether the cost of the design, production and distribution of the 2007 brochure had been subject to a competitive tendering exercise. In response, the Grants Officer reported that 17,000 copies of the brochure would be produced but was uncertain as to whether the costs of production and distribution had been subject to a competitive tendering exercise. It was suggested that APAGE be advised to carry forward the 2007 brochure design for future editions to save costs.

The Committee welcomed the format of Appendices A and B attached to the report.

RESOLVED

- (a) *that it be noted that since the last meeting a grant of £500 has been awarded under officer delegation to Abingdon Band towards the upkeep of its band room, the maintenance of instruments and the purchase of a computer programme for music for training purposes and that the Committee's remaining budget for 2006/07 is £16,680.48;*
- (b) *that the presentation from the Town Clerk on Abingdon Town Council's twinning activities in 2005/06 be received;*
- (c) *that the following requests for payment of the grants under Service Level Agreements be agreed:-*

*Abingdon Town Council - £2,500
Drayton Twinning Society - £500*

- (d) *that a grant of £4,000 be awarded to Abingdon Performance Arts Group Enterprise, towards the cost of producing a brochure for the Abingdon Arts Festival 2007 and that the Group be advised:-*
- (1) *to consider undertaking a tendering exercise for the cost of producing and distributing the 2007 brochure;*
 - (2) *that any future financial support from the Council will be dependent on the production and distribution of future brochure's having been subject to a competitive tendering exercise (Social Agenda and Town & Village Vitality priority);*
- (e) *that the grants awarded in 2005/06 and 2006/07 to support projects, services and events in the community, as set out in Appendix B to report 97/06 be noted.*

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

None.

The meeting rose at 7.52 pm