

Date: 13 March 2007

TO: All Members of the Abingdon Area
Committee
FOR ATTENDANCE

TO: All Other Members of the Council
FOR INFORMATION

Dear Sir/Madam

Your attendance is requested at a meeting of the **ABINGDON AREA COMMITTEE** to be held in the **GUILDHALL, ABINGDON** on **THURSDAY, 22ND MARCH, 2007** at **7.00 PM**.

Yours faithfully

Terry Stock
Chief Executive

Members are reminded of the provisions contained in Part 2 of the Local Code of Conduct, and Standing Order 34 regarding the declaration of Personal and Prejudicial Interests.

A G E N D A

Open to the Public including the Press

A large print version of this agenda is available. Any background papers referred to may be inspected by prior arrangement. Contact Carole Nicholl, Democratic Services Officer, on telephone number (01235) 547631.

Map and Vision

(Page 4)

A map showing the location of the venue for this meeting, together with a copy the Council Vision are attached.

1. Apologies for Absence

To receive apologies for absence.

2. Minutes

To adopt and sign as a correct the Minutes of the Meeting of the Abingdon Area Committee held on 19 October 2006, (previously circulated with the Council Summons dated 13 December 2006).

3. Declarations of Interest

To receive any declarations of Personal or Personal and Prejudicial Interests in respect of items on the agenda for this meeting.

In accordance with Part 2 of the Local Code of Conduct and the provisions of Standing Order 34, any Member with a personal interest must disclose the existence and nature of that interest to the meeting prior to the matter being debated. Where that personal interest is also a prejudicial interest, then the Member must withdraw from the room in which the meeting is being held and not seek improperly to influence any decision about the matter unless he/she has obtained a dispensation from the Standards Committee.

4. Urgent Business and Chair's Announcements

To receive notification of any matters, which the Chair determines, should be considered as urgent business and the special circumstances, which have made the matters urgent, and to receive any announcements from the Chair.

5. Statements and Petitions from the Public Under Standing Order 32

Any statements and/or petitions from the public under Standing Order 32 will be made or presented at the meeting.

6. Questions from the Public Under Standing Order 32

Any questions from members of the public under Standing Order 32 will be asked at the meeting.

7. Community Grants

(Wards Affected: Abingdon Abbey and Barton; Abingdon Caldecott; Abingdon Dunmore; Abingdon Fitzharris; Abingdon Northcourt; Abingdon Ock Meadow; Abingdon Peachcroft; Drayton; Sutton Courtenay and Appleford;)

(Pages 5 - 19)

To receive and consider report 170/06 of the Strategic Director (attached).

Introduction and Report Summary

The purpose of this report is to advise on the new process for delegating the determination of grants, to set out the budget position for this Committee in respect of Community Grants in 2006/07 and in 2007/08, to invite Members to consider and determine the grant applications received since the last meeting and to invite Members to agree a principle for awarding grants for additional parish cleansing.

The Contact Officer for this report is Lorna Edwards, Community Strategy Officer (Tel: 01235 547626)

Recommendations

- (a) *Members are asked to note that the process for delegating the determination of community grants applications (outlined in the report at Appendix A) has been approved by the Executive and that the grant narratives have been amended to reflect this*
- (b) *Members are asked to note that the Committee's remaining budget for 2006/07 is £12,680.48*
- (c) *Members are asked to consider and determine the grant application, the agenda and the Council priority in respect of the following:*
 - (i) **Abingdon & District Musical Society, up to £677**, to cover potential concert loss, Social Agenda, Town & Village Vitality priority
 - (ii) **1 Brewers Court, Abingdon**, towards tree maintenance, Environmental Agenda, Town & Village Vitality priority
 - (iii) **30 Hillview Road, Abingdon**, towards tree maintenance, Environmental Agenda, Town & Village Vitality priority
 - (iv) **67 Abingdon Road, Drayton**, towards tree maintenance, Environmental Agenda, Town & Village Vitality priority
- (d) *Members are asked to note that the Abingdon Area Committee's budget for 2007/08 is £28,388;*
- (e) *Members are invited to request that the Executive approves the carrying forward of any unspent grant budget from 2006/07 into 2007/08;*
- (f) *Members are asked to determine their principle for awarding grants for additional parish cleansing in 2007/08 and invited to determine these grants as set out in Appendix C to the report, to be paid from the 2007/08 budget;*
- (g) *Members are asked to note the range of projects, services and events supported by the Abingdon Area Committee in 2006/07 to date, as shown at Appendix D to this report.*

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

None.



OUR VISION AND AIMS

Our Vision is to build and safeguard a fair, open and compassionate community

The Vale of White Horse District Council aims to:

Strengthen local democracy and public involvement through access to information, consultation, and devolution of power so that everyone can take part in our community and contribute to the decisions which affect our lives

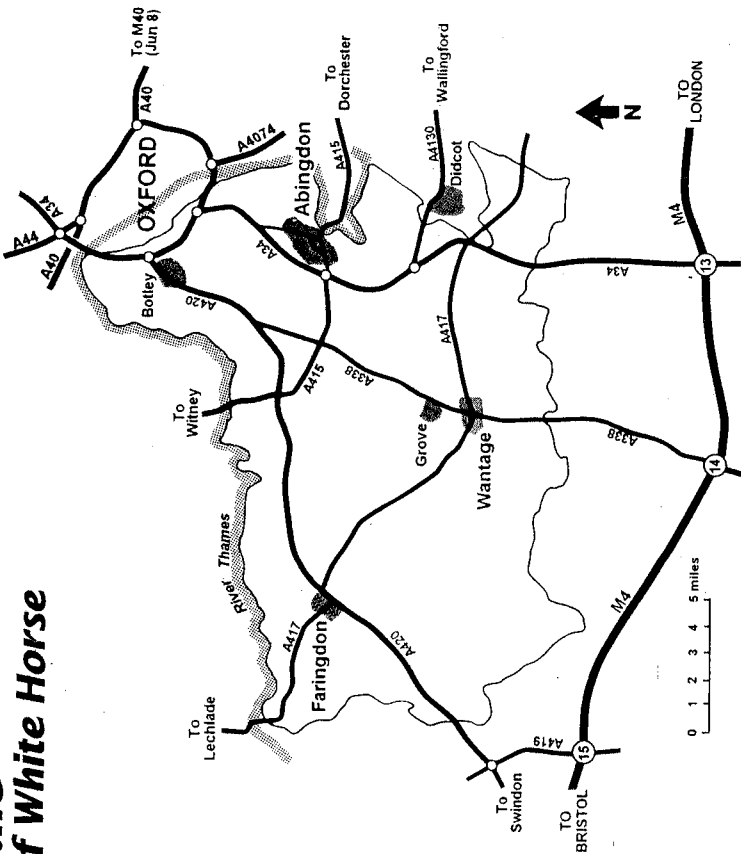
Create a safer community and improve the quality of life among Vale residents

Encourage a strong and sustainable economy which benefits all who live in, work in or visit the Vale

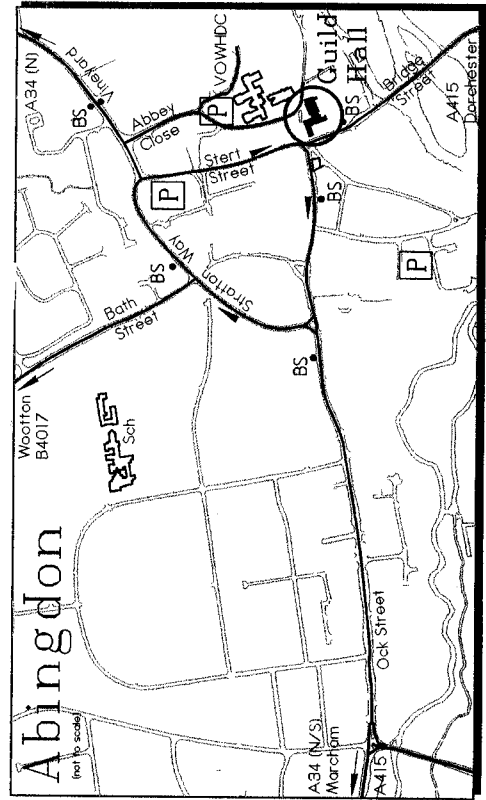
Help disadvantaged groups and individuals within the Vale to realise their full potential

Provide and support high quality public services which are effective, efficient and responsive to the needs of people within the Vale

Protect and improve our built and natural environment



Abingdon, Guildhall



KEY : BS = Bus Stop

LOCATION MAP



REPORT OF THE STRATEGIC DIRECTOR
TO THE ABINGDON AREA COMMITTEE
22 MARCH 2007

Community Grants

1.0 Introduction and Report Summary

1.1 The purpose of this report is to advise on the new process for delegating the determination of grants, to set out the budget position for this Committee in respect of Community Grants in 2006/07 and in 2007/08, to invite Members to consider and determine the grant applications received since the last meeting and to invite Members to agree a principle for awarding grants for additional parish cleansing.

1.2 The Contact Officer for this report is Lorna Edwards, Community Strategy Officer (Tel: 01235 547626)

2.0 Recommendations

- (a) *Members are asked to note that the process for delegating the determination of community grants applications (outlined in the report at Appendix A) has been approved by the Executive and that the grant narratives have been amended to reflect this*
- (b) *Members are asked to note that the Committee's remaining budget for 2006/07 is £12,680.48*
- (c) *Members are asked to consider and determine the grant application, the agenda and the Council priority in respect of the following:*
- (i) **Abingdon & District Musical Society, up to £677**, to cover potential concert loss, Social Agenda, Town & Village Vitality priority
 - (ii) **1 Brewers Court, Abingdon**, towards tree maintenance, Environmental Agenda, Town & Village Vitality priority
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 - (iv) **67 Abingdon Road, Drayton**, towards tree maintenance, Environmental Agenda, Town & Village Vitality priority
- (d) *Members are asked to note that the Abingdon Area Committee's budget for 2007/08 is £28,388;*
- (e) *Members are invited to request that the Executive approves the carrying forward of any unspent grant budget from 2006/07 into 2007/08;*
- (f) *Members are asked to determine their principle for awarding grants for additional parish cleansing in 2007/08 and invited to determine these grants as set out in Appendix C to the report, to be paid from the 2007/08 budget;*

(g) *Members are asked to note the range of projects, services and events supported by the Abingdon Area Committee in 2006/07 to date, as shown at Appendix D to this report.*

3.0 Relationship with the Council's Vision, Strategies and Policies

3.1 This report supports the Council's Vision and Priorities. It also supports the Vale Community Strategy. It does not conflict with any Council strategy or policy.

4.0 The delegation of the determination of community grant applications

4.1 Following a recommendation by the Council's Constitution Advisory Group on 28 September 2006 and the subsequent approval by Council on 18 October 2006, the Chairs and Chairmen of the four Area Committees were invited to a meeting on 13 December 2006 where a process for applications to be considered without the need to hold a Committee meeting was drawn up. The process was considered in a report to the Executive on 5 January 2007 and agreed.

4.2 The process will be used to determine community grant applications by e-mail (or post where a Member does not have e-mail) if a scheduled area committee meeting is cancelled. The meeting will be cancelled if by 15 working days before the scheduled date of the area committee meeting no grant applications have been received or the total value of grant applications received is less than £4,000.

4.3 If at this time there are applications that have been received (but in total the value of grants applied for is less than £4,000) officers will prepare a short narrative report and recommendation for each application.

4.4 The narrative must include any written statement that the applicant wishes to submit and the recommendations must include:

- Advice to approve or decline the application (there must be a reason for the advice that makes reference to the Council's priorities, the Area Committee's priorities and the community grant scheme criteria).

If approval is recommended:

- Advice on amount of grant to offer
- Advice on any special conditions that must be satisfied before the grant is paid

4.5 For the purposes of consistency and in order to avoid confusion, all narratives whether they will be considered by Members at a meeting of the Abingdon Area Committee or by officer delegation, are now being prepared with an officer recommendation according to the principles set out above.

5.0 Community Grants

5.1 Budget

The current budget position for the Abingdon Area Committee for Community Grants is as follows:

Budget b/f 2005/06	Budget 2006/07	Total budget 2006/07	Environmental Agenda Proportion	Social Agenda Proportion	Economic Agenda Proportion	Discretionary Proportion
£7,755.48	£28,220	£35,975.48	£9,877	£9,877	£2,822	£5,644 + £7,755.48
	Allocated	£23,295	£625	£9,877 + £12,793 from discretionary	£0	£12,793
	Remaining	£12,680.48	£9,252	£0	£2,822	£606.48

5.2 Community Grants

5.3 An application has been received in respect of the following and there are narratives providing additional details at Appendix B:

- (i) **Abingdon & District Musical Society, up to £677**, to cover potential concert loss, Social Agenda, Town & Village Vitality priority
- (ii) **1 Brewers Court, Abingdon**, towards tree maintenance, Environmental Agenda, Town & Village Vitality priority
- (ii) **30 Hillview Road, Abingdon**, towards tree maintenance, Environmental Agenda, Town & Village Vitality priority
- (iv) **67 Abingdon Road, Drayton**, towards tree maintenance, Environmental Agenda, Town & Village Vitality priority

6.0 Method of determining the 2007/08 budget for Area Committees

6.1 The Abingdon Area budget for 2007/08 has been calculated based on the electorate in the Abingdon Area on 1 January 2007. The same principle has been applied to determine the budget for other Area Committees.

6.2 The details for the Abingdon Area are as follows:

	Electorate 01/01/06	Electorate 01/01/07	% of electorate 01/01/06	% of electorate 01/01/07	Apportionment	Budget 06/07	Budget 07/08
	27,956	29,158	31.50%	31.70%	25.0335%	£28,220	£28,388
Totals whole of Vale	89,729	92,013	100%	100%	100%	£113,400	£113,400

7.0 Carry forward of unspent grant

Members are invited to request that the Executive approves the carrying forward of any unspent grant budget from 2006/07 into 2007/08.

8.0 Parish Cleansing bids for 2007/08

8.1 At the meeting of the Abingdon Area Committee on 28 March 2006 the members of the Committee considered two applications for additional parish cleansing. In view of the modest amount requested the Committee awarded the full amount requested, namely £500 to Drayton Parish Council and £45 to Appleford Parish Council.

8.2 The bids for additional parish cleansing which have been received by the deadline are listed in the table at Appendix C. The amount of grant requested for 2007/08 totals £1,475. The table includes a column showing the amount that would be awarded if the Committee adopts the same principle as for the current year.

8.3 Members of the Committee are invited to consider whether they wish to adopt the same principle for awarding grants for additional parish cleansing in 2007/08 and to determine the bids submitted.

9.0 Projects, services and events supported by the Abingdon Area Committee

9.1 At the first meeting of the current financial year Members of the Committee adopted a prospectus setting out the priorities for community grants in the Abingdon Area in 2006/07 based on the strands of the Vale Community Strategy.

9.2 The table at Appendix D shows the projects, services and events supported this year to date by the Abingdon Area Committee. As well as showing a breakdown of the grants awarded by Environmental, Social and Economic Agendas, the table shows whether the applications met the Community Grants Scheme criteria and which strand of the Abingdon Area Prospectus, and thus of the Vale Community Strategy, they support.

Members are asked to note the information provided.

TOBY WARREN
HEAD OF COMMUNITY STRATEGY

TIM SADLER
STRATEGIC DIRECTOR AND MONITORING OFFICER

Background Papers: Appendix B - Application Details

REPORT OF THE STRATEGIC DIRECTOR & MONITORING OFFICER
TO EXECUTIVE
5th January 2007

Delegation of the Determination of Community Grant Applications

1.0 Introduction and Report Summary

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is, to propose a process whereby community grant applications can be determined using delegated powers to the contentment of the whole of the membership of an Area Committee.
- 1.2 This report has been prepared as a result of the recommendation by the Council's Constitution Advisory Group on the 28th September 2006 and the subsequent approval by Council, on 18th October 2006, of an addition to the scheme of delegation.
- 1.3 The contact officer for this report is Toby Warren, Head of Community Strategy (Tel: 01235 547695).

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 *Members are requested to approve that when the total value of community grants applied for is less than £ 4,000 the relevant area committee meeting should be cancelled and the grant applications should be determined by email (or post if an elected member does not have email).*
- 2.2 *Members are requested to approve the proposed process for the determination of grants by email (which is described in paragraphs 5.1 to 5.13).*

3.0 Relationship with the Council's Vision, Strategies and Policies

- 3.1 This report supports the Council's Vision and Aims
- 3.2 It does not conflict with any Council strategy or any Council policy.

4.0 Background

- 4.1 All applications for community grants of more than £ 500 are decided by the Council's Executive Committee (when a grant application has district wide implications) or one of its Area Committees (West, North East, South East and Abingdon). These committees are made up of elected district councillors.
- 4.2 Community grant applications for less than £500 are not normally presented at a committee meeting. These applications are determined by officers, using delegated authority in consultation with the Chair of the relevant committee.
- 4.3 In the past year there have been several occasions when the main item on an area committee's agenda has been the determination of community grant applications but only one or two grant applications require determination or the total value of the grant applications has been less than £ 4,000.

- 4.4 In these circumstances the costs of room hire, officer time and officers' and elected members' travelling expenses means that it is difficult to justify the holding of a meeting.
- 4.5 However it is important that all community grant applications are determined with due consideration in a timely way to ensure that applicants do not have to wait unduly for a decision about a grant application. A delayed decision could delay the start of a project which is very important for the local community.
- 4.6 The Council's Constitution Advisory Group recommended on 28th September 2006 ' that the Area Committees be invited to amend their delegation to allow a small number of applications to be dealt with under delegated authority or by agreement outside of a meeting.'
- 4.7 On 18th October 2006 Council approved the following addition to the scheme of delegation:
- Deputy Director Planning and Community Strategy; Executive Functions:
 - To approve applications for community grants made to an Area Committee (to) the contentment of the whole of the membership of the Area Committee
- 4.8 The Strategic Director and Monitoring Officer advises that the aim of the delegation is that an Area Committee grant of any value can now be approved without the necessity to call a meeting. The Strategic Director and Monitoring Officer also advises that the Deputy Director, Planning and Community Strategy can further delegate this function to the Head of Community Strategy. The Deputy Director has confirmed this further delegation in writing.
- 4.9 The next section of this report proposes a process by which the delegation can be exercised to the contentment of the whole of the membership of the Area Committee.

5.0 The Proposed Process for Determination by Email

- 5.1 If by 15 working days before the scheduled date of the area committee meeting no grant applications have been received or the total value of grants applied for is less than £ 4,000 the meeting will be cancelled subject to the approval of the Chair of the relevant Area Committee.
- 5.2 If at this time there are applications that have been received (but in total the value of grants applied for is less than £ 4,000) officers will prepare a short narrative report and recommendation for each application.
- 5.3 The narrative must include any written statement that the applicant wishes to submit and the recommendation must include:
- Advice to approve or decline the application (there must be a reason for the advice that makes reference to the Council's priorities, the Area Committee's priorities and the community grant scheme criteria.)
- If approval is recommended:
- Advice on amount of grant to offer
 - Advice on any special conditions that must be satisfied before the grant is paid
- 5.4 The report and recommendation will be discussed with the chair of the committee and the relevant ward councillors. The committee chair and ward councillors can request amendments to the recommendation. The committee chair and/or ward councillors for the affected town or parish can request that the application is deferred until the next committee meeting.

- 5.5 Officers then circulate the report and recommendation to members of the committee by e-mail (or post if a member does not have e-mail). Members will be requested to respond within 5 working days of despatch. A majority of committee members must respond. If a member does not respond within this time period it will be assumed that the member has abstained from making a decision.
- 5.6 Members responding should indicate any personal or prejudicial interest and whether they are for or against; or propose an amendment of any part of the recommendation. Responses against or proposed amendments should include a short explanation of the member's decision.
- 5.7 If a majority of members responding are for or against the full recommendation the applicant will be advised accordingly. In the case of an equality of responses the chair's response will be casting.
- 5.8 If a majority of members responding are for a recommendation to approve an application but propose amendment of the amount of grant or conditions the applicant will be advised that the committee has been 'approved in principle' and the applicant can commence the project (which is the subject of the application) at their own risk. The final determination of the application will be deferred to the next committee meeting.
- 5.9 The intention will be that applications are determined or deferred by the date on which the committee would have met, had the meeting not been cancelled. It is important that applicants are not disadvantaged or inconvenienced by the cancellation of a meeting.
- 5.10 Details of decisions made by e-mail will be reported at the next meeting of the committee. The minutes of this meeting will be published on the Council's website.
- 5.11 If a committee meeting is cancelled and grant applications are determined by email the next scheduled meeting of the committee should take place, regardless of the number or value of grant applications to be determined at the meeting.
- 5.12 It is not intended that the decision by email process should be used to fast track applications so that they are determined before the date of the next scheduled committee meeting. However if an applicant makes a clear case that an application is urgent (e.g. property repairs need to be carried to reduce the risk of property damage) officers, following consultation with the chair of the relevant area committee, can use the decision by email process.
- 5.13 The decision by email process can also be used by the Executive if there is a clear case that a grant application that will be determined by the Executive needs to be determined before the date of the next scheduled Executive meeting.

6.0 Conclusion

- 6.1 When the total value of grants applied for is less than £ 4,000 the determination by email process will allow a meeting to be cancelled. This is a cost efficiency but applicants are not disadvantaged or inconvenienced by the cancellation of a meeting.
- 6.2 The cancellation of an Area Committee meeting because there are insufficient matters requiring decisions by members does not preclude members of a committee (through the chair) requesting officers to convene a meeting of the area forum (which is not a decision making body) in order to discuss matters of interest with local communities. Forums can be organised at a lower cost because they are not decision making bodies and do not require the attendance of a democratic services officer.

TIM SADLER
STRATEGIC DIRECTOR & MONITORING OFFICER

TOBY WARREN
HEAD OF COMMUNITY STRATEGY

Background Papers: None

APPENDIX B

(i) Applicant: Abingdon and District Musical Society (ADMS)

Years in existence: 60 years

Type of organisation: Registered charity

Project or service details: The Musical Society is seeking a grant towards staging a major concert in St Helen's Church in May with a performance of Karl Jenkins' 'The Armed Man'. This is the last concert in the 2006/07 programme. 'The Armed Man' is an expensive piece of music to stage but will offer much to the performers and audience. It is estimated that the concert will make a loss of between £302 and £677.

ADMS is a musical society with a choir and orchestra. It was established in 1946 to 'foster public knowledge and appreciation of music and to develop local musical amateur talent both choral and instrumental'. It charges members a subscription of £85 p.a. which covers the running costs (rehearsal hall and administrative costs, weekly fee rates for professional lead musicians plus subsidy towards concert losses). Grants help the Society to put on concerts and to keep the subscriptions at a reasonable level so it accessible to the greatest number of people.

Supports following Vale Community Strategy strands: Recreation, Culture & Leisure, Town & Village Vitality, Education and Lifelong Learning

Area of the Vale covered: Predominantly Abingdon and surrounding villages

Estimate of number of people the project/service/event will benefit: The society has 110 members; audiences for the concerts are 150-200 people

Charge to public for using the project/service/event?: £10/£8 per person; £1 for children's tickets to encourage families to attend

Total estimated project cost: £2,147 (no VAT applies)

Balances: £9,156.64 at 30/06/06

Running Costs: £19,965.97 year ending 30/06/06

Own Contribution: Estimated income from concert: between £1,470 and £1,845 from ticket sales, drinks, programme sales and advertising

Grant Sought: **£677 maximum to cover potential loss**

Previous Awards (Vale): £630 awarded (but only £587.15 needed) 2005/06

Town Council Support: £400 received from Abingdon Town Council towards concert in March 2007

Town Precept: £835,400 (Band 'D': £66.91)

Other Support: Own fundraising events

Officer recommendation (Toby Warren, Head of Community Strategy):

Recommend support	Yes
Amount recommended	Up to £677 guarantee against loss
Reasons:	
Meets CG Scheme criteria	Yes
Supports Council priority(ies)	Cleaner, greener, safer, healthier community and environment
Supports prospectus strand(s)	Recreation, Culture & Leisure; Town & Village Vitality; Education & Lifelong Learning
Remaining budget	£12,680.48
Remaining Committee meetings	0
Total amount recommended for other applications being considered	
Recommended conditions to grant award	
Other comments	

(ii) Applicant: The owner, 1 Brewers Court, Abingdon

Brief outline of work:

20% crown reduction of large sycamore in courtyard of Brewers Court, off Ock Street. This sycamore is the subject of a TPO.

Financial Information:

Total cost of work: £305.50

Officer comment (George Reade, Arboriculture Officer):

The tree is a large sycamore that directly affects a number of properties in Brewers Court. The works undertaken help to contain the tree's size and remove some of the hazards from the trees, such as deadwood.

Officer recommendation (Toby Warren, Head of Community Strategy):

Recommend support	Yes
Amount recommended	£122.20 (40% of the cost as under the former scheme)
Reasons:	
Meets CG Scheme criteria	Yes. The Committee will consider support for the maintenance of trees that are privately owned, if the trees are the subject of a tree preservation order.
Supports Council priority(ies)	Cleaner, greener, healthier and safer community and environment
Supports prospectus strand(s)	Environment
Remaining budget	£12,680.48
Remaining Committee meetings	0
Total amount recommended for other applications being considered	
Recommended conditions to grant award	
Other comments	Please refer to Arboriculture Officer's comment

(iii) Applicant: The owner, 30 Hillview Road, Abingdon

Brief outline of work:

Selective crown reduction of large oak in garden of the above. This oak is the subject of a TPO.

Financial Information:

Total cost of work: £581.63

Officer comment (George Reade, Arboriculture Officer):

This large oak directly affects the properties around 30 Hillview Road. It is close to the roofs and overhangs the pavement and a street lamp.

Officer recommendation (Toby Warren, Head of Community Strategy):

Recommend support	Yes
Amount recommended	£232.65 (40% of total cost as under the former scheme)
Reasons:	
Meets CG Scheme criteria	Yes. The Committee will consider support for the maintenance of trees that are privately owned, if the trees are the subject of a tree preservation order.
Supports Council priority(ies)	Cleaner, greener, healthier and safer community and environment
Supports prospectus strand(s)	Environment
Remaining budget	£12,680.48
Remaining Committee meetings	0
Total amount recommended for other applications being considered	
Recommended conditions to grant award	
Other comments	Please refer to Arboriculture Officer's comment

(iv) **Applicant: The owner, 67 Abingdon Road, Drayton**

Brief outline of work

30% crown reduction of white poplar in rear garden of the above. This poplar is the subject of a TPO.

Financial Information:

Total cost of work: £1,586.25

Officer comment (George Reade, Arboriculture Officer):

The tree is a large poplar easily seen from the major road passing through Drayton from Abingdon. There were safety and overshadowing concerns expressed by the Vale Housing Association who own adjacent properties and these have been addressed by carrying out the work.

Officer recommendation (Toby Warren, Head of Community Strategy):

Recommend support	Yes
Amount recommended	£634.50 (40% of total amount as under the former scheme)
Reasons:	
Meets CG Scheme criteria	Yes. The Committee will consider support for the maintenance of trees that are privately owned, if the trees are the subject of a tree preservation order.
Supports Council priority(ies)	Cleaner, greener, healthier and safer community and environment
Supports prospectus strand(s)	Environment
Remaining budget	£12,680.48
Remaining Committee meetings	0
Total amount recommended for other applications being considered	
Recommended conditions to grant award	
Other comments	Please refer to Arboriculture Officer's comment

