

# Ab.44

## MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE ABINGDON AREA COMMITTEE

HELD AT THE GUILDHALL,  
ABINGDON ON THURSDAY, 19TH  
MARCH, 2009 AT 7.00PM

### Open to the Public, including the Press

PRESENT:

MEMBERS: Councillor Angela Lawrence (Chair), Beth Fleming (Vice-Chair), Richard Webber, Tony de Vere, Richard Gibson, Julie Mayhew-Archer and Laurel Symons.

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE: Lorna Edwards, Claire Litchfield and Toby Warren.

NUMBER OF MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC: 1

### Ab.36 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Janet Morgan, Samantha Bowring, Pat Lonergan, Alison Rooke, Mary de Vere and Gervase Duffield.

### Ab.37 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 6 November 2008 were adopted and signed as a correct record.

The minutes were agreed as a correct record subject to corrections to references (minute Ab.31) that the Town Council “ran” the Chamber of Commerce, as this was not the case.

### Ab.38 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members declared interests in report 175/08 – Community Grants as follows:-

<u>Member</u>	<u>Type of interest</u>	<u>Item</u>	<u>Reason</u>	<u>Minute Ref</u>
Beth Fleming	Personal	Oxfordshire Play Association	In so far as the school at which she was employed was a member of the association.	Ab.42
Richard Webber	Personal and Prejudicial	Drayton Village Hall	In so far as he was a member of the Village Hall Management.	Ab.42
Richard Webber	Personal and Prejudicial	Drayton Village Hall	In so far as he was a Member of Drayton Parish Council.	Ab.42

Ab.39 URGENT BUSINESS AND CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chair reminded those present that after the meeting there would be an informal meeting of Members to discuss the Abingdon Area Forum.

The Chair reported that Councillor Richard Webber would have to leave the meeting early. The Chair advised that she had therefore agreed to consider the application from Drayton Village Hall, in which Councillor Webber had a personal and prejudicial interest at a later point in the meeting when he had left.

Ab.40 STATEMENTS AND PETITIONS FROM THE PUBLIC UNDER STANDING ORDER  
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It was noted that Rosemary Joseph, of Abingdon Music Festival had given notice that she wished to make a statement.

Ms Joseph made a statement in support of the application for a community grant on behalf of the Abingdon Music Festival. She advised that the money sought was intended for a special event which would be running a conducting master class. She advised that there was a great deal of interest in conducting following a recent BBC television series. She stated that the event was over and above the usual events run by the Music Festival, which was why separate funds were being sought from the Vale. She reported that the Town Council had given £350 towards the project and advised that Radley College had agreed to permit use of its hall for the event free of charge. She advised that she had been advised that applications under the value of £500 were dealt with by Officers under delegated powers and had not anticipated having to come to the Committee to ask for support. She stated that she had been advised of the need to come to Committee due to the fact that the budget was now very limited. She commented that the festival would have made an application earlier in the year had it been aware of this possibility.

The Chair thanked Ms Joseph for her statement.

Ab.41 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC UNDER STANDING ORDER 32

None.

Ab.42 COMMUNITY GRANTS

The Committee received and considered report 175/08 of the Strategic Director detailing grant applications.

One Member commented that it was clear that there was insufficient budget remaining to award grants to all of the applicants and questioned how the Committee was going to consider each one. It was agreed that the Committee would consider each application, decide whether to support the application in principle and thereafter determine an amount to be awarded.

One Member questioned the status of the applications of the Compass Café and The Vale of White Horse Foyer, which had both been awarded a grant by the Committee, subject to grant applications made to the County Council being unsuccessful. Officers confirmed that the grants which had been allocated (£3,000 to the Compass Café and £670 to The Vale of White Horse Foyer), had been deducted from the remaining budget. Officers confirmed that applications had not been made to the County Council and were unlikely to be made as there was no remaining budget. Members therefore considered that these sums should be returned to balances.

The Committee considered each application as follows: -

### Abingdon Music Festival

One Member commented that he had attended the events organised by the Festival last year and had found them to be well attended. He added that there had been a genuine feeling of all round participation and therefore he considered the application worthy of support. Other Members agreed but one Member disagreed commenting that this event targeted too small a number of people. However on a show of hands it was agreed by 5 votes to nil that the application should be supported.

### Oxfordshire Film and Video Makers

One Member questioned the benefit of the initiative for Abingdon residents. One Member advised that the projects run were well attended by local school children and considered that the experiences on offer were of benefit. One Member commented that he did not support the application and suggested that given the limited number of people likely to benefit, the Committee should not to support a grant application. Other Members agreed and it was concluded that given the limited number of people who would benefit a grant should not be offered.

### Oxfordshire Play Association

Councillors Beth Fleming had declared a personal interest in part of this item.

In response to a question raised regarding the benefit of the Play Association it was commented that most after school clubs and toddler groups were members and this gave them an opportunity to receive play equipment. No Members spoke against the application and the Committee agreed that a grant should be offered.

### South and Vale Carers Centre

One Member commented that this application should be supported as it provided a link for carers with a real presence in Abingdon. Members agreed that this project was important and that a grant should be offered.

### Assisted Reading for Children in Oxfordshire

Members questioned the benefit of the scheme in Abingdon. Officers advised that the scheme was in operation all over Oxfordshire and coordinated volunteers to go into schools to help with reading. It was advised that schools were waiting for volunteers. It

was noted that the scheme was present in Rush Common, Carswell, Dunmore and Sutton Courtney Primary Schools.

One Member commented that she considered that charging schools £275 was expensive and was not sure what the £1,000 sought would be spent on. She stated that she was sympathetic to the need, however did not consider that the application should be supported. Another Member commented that reading in schools should be funded by the County Council. Other Members agreed and it was concluded that no grant should be offered.

The Oxfordshire Playbus

One Member advised that the playbus was worthy of support, as it attended special schools in order to give students an opportunity to have experiences outside of the classroom. One Member agreed and added that the play bus attended special events if requested, such as the fun day at Dalton Barracks. No Members spoke against the application and the Committee agreed to support the offer of a grant.

Drayton Village Hall

Councillor Richard Webber had declared a personal and prejudicial interest in this application and he withdrew from the meeting room during its consideration.

One Member advised that Drayton Village Hall was well used. Members agreed that the work proposed was important in creating a more inviting atmosphere for users. No Member spoke against the application and the Committee agreed to the offer of a grant.

Parish Cleansing Grants

Councillor Richard Webber had declared a personal and prejudicial interest in this part of the item and he withdrew from the meeting room during its consideration.

Members were reminded that they had agreed to phase out the awarding of parish cleansing grants over a two year period, this being the second year.

*RESOLVED*

- (a) *that the remaining budget for the Abingdon Area Committee be noted as £5739.72;*
- (b) *that the sum of £3,670 be returned to the budget for 2008/9 (proposed by Councillor Beth Fleming, seconded by Councillor Julie Mayhew Archer and agreed by 7 votes to nil);*
- (c) *that the grant applications be determined as follows: -*

<u>Applicant</u>	<u>Purpose of Grant</u>	<u>Agenda and Priority</u>	<u>Amount</u>	

Abingdon Music Festival	Towards a master class in conducting	Social Agenda, Town and Village Vitality Priority	£475	Proposed by Councillor Julie Mayhew Archer, seconded by Councillor Tony de Vere and agreed by 7 votes to nil.
Drayton Village Hall	Towards the replacement doors	Social agenda Town and Village priority	£1,000	Proposed by Councillor Richard Gibson, seconded by Councillor Beth Fleming and agreed by 6 votes to nil with 1 of the voting Members not being present.
Oxford Film & Video Makers	Summerscreen 2009 Activities	-	Nil	Proposed by Councillor Richard Gibson, seconded by Councillor Beth Fleming and agreed by 4 votes to 2 with 1 abstention.

- (d) that the grant applications which were awarded a grant by the Executive on 17 October 2008 be determined as follows: -:

<u>Applicant</u>	<u>Purpose of Grant</u>	<u>Agenda and Priority</u>	<u>Amount</u>	
Oxfordshire Play Association	Towards core costs of providing support services to play settings	Social Agenda Access priority	£500	Proposed by Councillor Tony de Vere, seconded by Councillor Angela Lawrence and agreed by 4 votes to 2 with 1 abstention.
South and Vale Carers	Towards the core costs of support services to carers	Social agenda, access priority	£1,000	Proposed by Councillor Tony de Vere, seconded by Councillor Laurel Symons and agreed by 7 votes to nil.
Assisted reading for Children in Oxfordshire	To impart a love of reading to children in the Vale	-	Nil	Proposed by Councillor Richard Gibson, seconded by Councillor Tony de Vere and agreed by 3 votes to 1 with 2 abstentions.

<i>Oxfordshire Playbus</i>	<i>Towards the cost of a replacement sensory vehicle for children with special needs</i>	<i>Social agenda, access priority</i>	<i>£1,000</i>	<i>Proposed by Councillor Richard Webber, seconded by Councillor Tony de Vere and agreed by 7 votes to nil.</i>
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- (e) *that the Executive be requested to approve the carry forward of unspent grant budget from 2008/9 into 2009/10;*
- (f) *that the budget for the Abingdon Area Committee for 2009/10 be noted; and*
- (g) *that the following be awarded as additional parish cleansing grants to be taken from the 2009/10 budget, (proposed by Councillor Richard Gibson and seconded by Councillor Tony de Vere and agreed by 6 votes to nil with 1 of the voting Members not being present): -*
  - a. Appleford Parish Council - £75*
  - b. Drayton Parish Council - £300.*

**Ab.43 TARGETING GRANTS FOR THE ABINGDON AREA**

The Committee received and considered report 176/08 of the Strategic Director which asked Members to consider the production of a grants prospectus for the Abingdon Area and to determine its contents.

Officers advised that the intention was to give potential applicants an idea of what types of grants were particularly welcome at this Committee. It was commented that it was not an attempt to be prescriptive and to exclude other types of applications.

One Member questioned what the prospectus would look like and suggested that something be prepared that was more user friendly than the current folder. Officers responded that it was unlikely that a glossy magazine would be produced given budget constraints. However Officers undertook to approach the Council's Communications Team with a view to improving the current format.

The Committee agreed that a prospectus would be useful and went through the priorities highlighted in the report to determine which would be included. It was agreed that the following would be taken out of the prospectus:

Vale Community Strategy Priorities	Priorities in the Abingdon Area 2009/10
Safer Communities	Reassuring people that the Vale is a relatively safe place to live so that they do not live in fear of crime.
A good understanding of town and parish priorities	Preparing parish action plans

Helping those without cars to access jobs or services	Improving community transport schemes providing local service directories or websites; voluntary sector advice “roadshows” visiting village halls.
Affordable Homes	To be determined
Good Quality Homes	Providing proactive housing advice for hard to reach groups
Addressing economic weakness	Providing after school clubs
Building on economic strengths	To be determined

In addition to the removal of the above it was agreed that the following be inserted under the priority “A low carbon vale” – community climate change initiatives.

*RESOLVED*

*that a community grants prospectus be supported subject to the comments referred to above.*

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

None.

The meeting rose at 8.55 pm