

# SE.1

MINUTES OF A MEETING  
OF THE SOUTH EAST AREA COMMITTEE

HELD AT THE CIVIC HALL,  
WANTAGE ON WEDNESDAY,  
6TH JULY, 2005

Open to the Public, including the Press

PRESENT:

MEMBERS: Councillor Terry Cox, Joyce Hutchinson, John Dunsdon, Richard Farrell, Terry Fraser, Jenny Hannaby, David Phillips, Ginnie Stock, Margaret Turner and Derek Verdin

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

NUMBER OF MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC: 2

SE.1 ELECTION OF A CHAIRMAN

*RESOLVED*

*that Councillor Terry Cox be elected Chairman of the South East Area Committee for the ensuing Municipal Year.*

SE.2 ELECTION OF A VICE-CHAIR

*RESOLVED*

*that Councillor Richard Farrell be elected Vice-Chair of the South East Area Committee for the ensuing Municipal Year.*

SE.3 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Elsa Boyce, Andrew Crawford, Eddy Goldsmith, Jim Moley, Richard Stone and Pam Westwood.

SE.4 MINUTES

The minutes of the Area Committee meeting held on 10 March 2005 were signed and adopted as a correct record.

SE.5 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The following interests were declared in relation to item 9 - Community Grants (minute SE.7 refers). Councillors Jenny Hannaby, Joyce Hutchinson and Derek Verdin each declared personal interests in the grant application from Wantage, Grove and District Twinning Association. Councillor Terry Fraser declared a personal interest regarding the grant application from the Hendreds Twinning Group. Councillor Richard Farrell declared a personal interest in relation to an application from Blewbury Parish Council as he was its Chairman. Councillor Margaret Turner declared a personal interest in relation to applications from Harwell Parish Council, as a Member of that Council, and St Matthew's Harwell Parochial Church Council, as a member of the church. Councillor Jenny Hannaby also declared a personal interest in relation to an application from the Wantage Counselling Service as a member on its Committee.

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## SE.6 STATEMENTS AND PETITIONS FROM THE PUBLIC UNDER STANDING ORDER 32

- (1) The Reverend Chris Stott made a statement in support of the grant application by St Matthews Harwell Parochial Church Council. He reported that much of the previous work at the church had been carried out by volunteers. Now work was necessary to provide a toilet and kitchen facilities to comply with the Disability Discrimination Act. Tenders had been obtained, increasing the cost slightly to £15,851 plus VAT. Updating the meeting, he reported that, following successful fund raising, the Historic Churches Preservation Trust had recently awarded a grant of £1,500. This left £4,621 to fund the project. He reported that any level of contribution the Committee could make would be gratefully received.
- (2) Mr Geoffrey Stokell made a statement in support of the grant application by Wantage Summer Festival 2005. He reported that the festival was a unique occasion of fellowship and festivity producing activities and entertainment for all ages. The festival included a variety of music, dance, exhibitions, guided walks, fitness lessons, a party in the park, a teddy bears' picnic and an outdoor showing of the film 'Grease'. The funds provided in the past had assisted with costs of the festival, including printing, ticketing and insurance costs. He welcomed any assistance the Committee could give.

## SE.7 COMMUNITY GRANTS

### (a) Capital Funding

At the last meeting of the Committee, Members had requested an update on the availability of capital funding if applicants could show that this would significantly increase their chances of lottery or environmental trust funding. The Strategic Director, Steve Bishop, had produced a briefing note, which was appended to the agenda. Members noted that any capital funding would require the approval of the Executive.

It was suggested that the paper could be written in a more readable fashion, giving better explanations to non-accountants.

*RESOLVED*

*that the briefing paper on capital funding be received.*

### (b) Grant Applications

The Area Committee received and considered report 48/05 of the Strategic Director, which set out applications for community grants in the South East Area of the Vale. The report also updated Members on the latest financial position. The 2005/06 budget for the Area Committee had been significantly reduced from last year. The budget for the year now stood at £24,948 plus £3,473.32 carried forward from last year. Members noted that £2,500 had been allocated from the Committee's budget for Service Level Agreement grant funding for the Wantage, Grove and District Twinning Association (£2,000) and the Hendreds Twinning Group (£500). With these adjustments, the remaining budget for 2005/06 was £25,921.32.

The Committee discussed how it should deal with grant applications throughout the year, bearing in mind the reduced budget now available.

In relation to Parish Cleansing Grants, the Committee considered that these could not be cut this year as Parish Councils had levied their precepts with the contracted costs for cleaning in mind. It was noted that Parish Cleansing Grants were due to be

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reviewed during the course of the year by the Executive, possibly in September 2005. It was noted that Parish Cleansing Grants were for cleaning of areas not within the Parish Council's ownership and not for general cleaning costs throughout the village. It was suggested that Parish Councils should be asked to indicate how they spent their grants in the current financial year.

Members agreed to award the parish cleansing grants on the agenda, as applied for, but asked that guidance was sought from the Executive on how applications for such grants should be treated during the course of the current financial year.

It was suggested that a reduction could be made in all grant awards in the current financial year. Each application would be considered on its merits. Another suggestion was made that no grants should be paid for re-thatching historic buildings following the budget cuts. These grants had allowed the Council to control how re-thatching was carried out in accordance with traditional local methods. However, Members considered that alternative ways to control re-thatching should be investigated by the officers. The grants awarded in the past year had been limited to £1,250. This was only a small fraction of the total cost and only financially benefited the owner, not the community at large. By 9 votes to nil, Members agreed that no re-thatching grants should be offered in 2005/06 as the reduced budget could be better used elsewhere.

Members noted the financial position and agreed to allocate the budget carefully during the course of the year. Applications under £500 could continue to be awarded under delegated authority.

Updating the report, the officer reported that Wantage Blind Club was now seeking a grant for £880.

The Committee discussed the application from Wantage Summer Festival, as detailed on the agenda. It was noted that the festival organisers had applied for, and been awarded a grant in January 2005 for the Wantage Summer Festival. It was believed at the time that this was towards the cost of the 2005 event. However, it transpired that this application was for the 2004 event. The applicant was now seeking funds for the 2005 event. Members considered that as mistakes had been made and an application had been mislaid during 2004, the Committee should rectify the situation by amending the January 2005 grant allocation to refer to the 2004 event and award a new grant for 2005.

## RESOLVED

(a) *that the Committee's budget for 2005/06 is £28,421.32 (including £3,473.32 carried forward from 2004/05) which is apportioned as follows:*

- |                                     |                              |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| • <i>Environmental Agenda (35%)</i> | <i>£8,731.80</i>             |
| • <i>Social Agenda (35%)</i>        | <i>£8,731.80</i>             |
| • <i>Economic Agenda (10%)</i>      | <i>£2,494.80</i>             |
| • <i>Discretionary (20%)</i>        | <i>£4,989.60 + £3,473.32</i> |

(b) *that it be noted that grants totaling £2,500 are to be awarded to the following two twinning associations in the South East Area as directed by the Executive on 6 August 2004, subject to the completion of service level agreements:*

- |   |               |
|---|---------------|
| • <i>Wantage, Grove &amp; District Twinning Association</i> | <i>£2,000</i> |
| • <i>Hendreds Twinning Group</i>                            | <i>£500</i>   |

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(c) that the following parish cleansing grants be awarded for 2005/06, subject to each Parish Council being asked to clarify how the grant will be spent and subject to the Parish Councils being advised that the future of these grants are to be reviewed during the course of the year:

• Ardington & Lockinge	£40.80
• Blewbury	£200.00
• Charney Bassett	£160.00
• Childrey	£77.50
• Chilton	£172.90
• Harwell	£1314.67
• Milton	£450.00
• West Hendred	£150.00

(d) that the Executive be requested to advise on how the Area Committees should determine parish cleansing grants in the current financial year;

(e) that the grant awarded by the Committee on 20 January 2005 to Wantage Summer Festival be re-allocated to the 2004 festival;

(f) that the following grants be awarded:

<b>Applicant</b>	<b>Scheme</b>	<b>Grant</b>
Wantage Blind Club	Towards the cost of providing transport for the blind	£880 (Social agenda and Access priority) (by 9 votes to nil with 1 abstention)
Wantage Counselling Service	Running costs	£1500 (Social agenda and Access priority) (by 10 votes to nil)
St Matthew's Harwell Parochial Church Council	Extension to provide disabled facilities	£2,000 (Social agenda and Access priority) (by 10 votes to nil)
St Mary's Church, Childrey	Restoration of church tower and nave	£1,000 (Environmental agenda and Town and Village priority) (by 7 votes to 3)
Wantage Summer Festival	Running costs of 2005 festival	£2,500 Social agenda and Town and Village priority) (by 8 votes to nil with 2 abstentions)

(g) that, due to the reduction in the Committee's budget in 2005/06, no grants be awarded for re-thatching historic buildings; and

(h) that all applications for grants under £500, continue to be awarded under delegated authority, including applications to carry out works to trees, secured by a Tree Preservation Order.

## SE.8 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was noted that the next meeting would be held on Tuesday 13 September 2005.

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

None.

The meeting rose at 8.40 pm