

Ab.18

MINUTES OF A MEETING
OF THE ABINGDON AREA COMMITTEE

HELD AT THE GUILDHALL,
ABINGDON ON WEDNESDAY,
1ST FEBRUARY, 2006 AT 7.00PM

Open to the Public, including the Press

PRESENT:

MEMBERS: Councillor Julie Mayhew-Archer (Chair), Jim Halliday (Vice-Chair), Janet Morgan, Mike Badcock, Mary de Vere, Tony de Vere, Gervase Duffield, Peter Jones, Monica Lovatt, Roz Smith and Laurel Symons

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE: Carole Nicholl, Lorna Edwards and Toby Warren

NUMBER OF MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC: 6

Ab.23 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were recorded from Councillors Paul Bizzell, Richard Gibson, Peter Green, Alison Rooke and Richard Webber.

Ab.24 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 11 October 2005 were adopted and signed as a correct record subject to the words "(Vice-Chair)" being removed and replaced after the name Jim Halliday in the list of Members present.

Ab.25 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members declared interests as follows:-

<u>Councillor</u>	<u>Type of Interest</u>	<u>Item</u>	<u>Reason</u>	<u>Minute Ref</u>
Mike Badcock	Personal and Prejudicial	Urgent Business – Abingdon Science Partnership Grant Application	– He was a County Councillor and Caldecott School was within his Ward	Ab.27 & Ab.31
Mary de Vere	Personal	Urgent Business – Abingdon Science Partnership Grant Application	– She was a Governor at Thameside School which would be involved in the Science Partnership	Ab.27 & Ab.31
Tony de Vere	Personal	Urgent Business – Abingdon Science Partnership Grant Application	– He was a Governor at John Mason School which would be involved in the Science Partnership	Ab.27 & Ab.31
Janet Morgan	Personal	Urgent Business – Abingdon Science Partnership Grant Application	– She was a Governor at John Mason School which would be involved in the Science Partnership	Ab.27 & Ab.31

Laurel Symons	Personal	Urgent Business – Abingdon Science Partnership Grant Application	She was a Governor of Fitzharris School which would be involved in the Science Partnership	Ab.27 & Ab.31
Tony de Vere	Personal	Abingdon Decorative and Fine Arts Grant Application	He was a Governor of John Mason School which would be involved in the Arts Project	Ab.30(2)
Jim Halliday	Personal	Abingdon Town Council – Twinning Activities – Grant under the Service Level Agreement	The Twinning Officer was a neighbour and would benefit from the grant in terms of her salary	Ab.30(8)
Julie Mayhew-Archer	Personal and Prejudicial	Abingdon Town Council – Twinning Activities – Grant under the Service Level Agreement	She was a Member of Abingdon Town Council, the applicant	Ab.30(8)
Peter Jones	Personal and Prejudicial	Abingdon Town Council – Twinning Activities – Grant under the Service Level Agreement	He was a Member of Abingdon Town Council, the applicant	Ab.30(8)
Monica Lovatt	Personal and Prejudicial	Abingdon Town Council – Twinning Activities – Grant under the Service Level Agreement	She was a Member of Abingdon Town Council, the applicant	Ab.30(8)

Ab.26 URGENT BUSINESS AND CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**(1) Urgent Business**

The Chair reported that in accordance with Section 100B(4)(b) of the Local Government Act 1972 and Standing Order 21(4), she had agreed to accept an item of urgent business regarding a grant application in respect of the Abingdon Science Partnership – Schools 2006 Science Fair. She had agreed to accept this as an item of urgent business in view of the funding support for the partnership having been withdrawn and the urgent need to seek emergency funding with the Science Fair being held in March and a decision being required thereon before the next meeting of the Committee (Minute Ab.31).

(2) Chair's Announcements

The Chair announced that the Head of Innovation and Enterprise had received correspondence from Colin and Fran Trinder on behalf of the Peachcroft Christian Centre advising that contracts were to be signed shortly with Latimer Construction Limited giving an anticipated start date of 13 February 2006 with completion estimated for October 2006 in respect of works to the Christian Centre. Members were asked to note that their £25,000 grant had been fundamental in making the project viable and thanks to the Council for its contribution were recorded.

The Chair announced that N Power had indicated that it would not dump fly ash in the Radley Lakes. However, Councillor Gervase Duffield, who was the Council's representative on the Didcot Power Station Local Liaison Committee, advised that he thought that N Power had suggested that it would still dump in one lake but not the other and therefore clarification on this would need to be sought.

Ab.27 STATEMENTS AND PETITIONS FROM THE PUBLIC UNDER STANDING ORDER 32

(Councillors Laurel Symons, Janet Morgan, Tony de Vere and Mary de Vere had each declared a personal interest in part of this item and in accordance with Standing Order 34 they remained in the meeting during its consideration.)

(Councillor Mike Badcock had declared a personal and prejudicial interest in part of this item and in accordance with Standing Order 34 he withdrew from the meeting during Clare Harding's statement in support of the Abingdon Science Partnership grant application.)

The Committee was advised that notice had been received from three members of the public that they each wished to make a statement at the meeting as follows:-

1. Elizabeth Hanscombe made a statement in support of the grant application in respect of the Abingdon Musical Festival Association. She reported that the Abingdon Musical Festival was now in its ninth year and was proud of the prestige it brought locally during the Annual Arts Festival and also of its reputation as a friendly and informal event. It was commented that a wide range of participants of all ages from beginners right up to those who had already reached a high standard were welcome. She referred to the dreams of soloists to perform in front of a symphony orchestra and commented on the delight when in 2004 the conductor of the Abingdon Symphony Orchestra had suggested collaboration. An application had been made to the Awards for All Programme and a generous grant had been received which had assisted in several rewarding occasions, details of which were outlined. It was considered that a similar venture should be repeated in 2006 although the festival was not eligible for a second lottery grant. She commented on their gratitude for grant awards in previous years, commenting that details of all sponsors were highlighted on all published material.

2. Clare Harding made a statement on behalf of the Abingdon Science Partnership. She explained that the fair was a Science Fair held in the Guildhall and had been running for several years. About 50 schools provided interactive activities and this year the theme of the fair would be "My Incredible Body". It was anticipated that approximately 1,000 children would attend and there would be guest speakers and activities to take part in. She commented on the enjoyment experienced by the children and on the ability of teachers to have a chance to demonstrate their work. She commented that the fair was useful for sharing ideas and was a good partnership link between schools and teachers working together in science which was unusual. She explained that the fair highlighted the importance of educating children especially with regard to science and outlined the reason for the shortfall of funding for this year.

3. Mr Wilkinson made a statement in support of the grant application from the Abingdon Concert Band. He explained that the band had been operating for many years and had attended many events. He referred to the enjoyment experienced by the local community and provided details of the players and events. He commented that the Abingdon Concert Band was a registered charity and therefore relied on funding from fund raising activities, grants and donations. He explained that the band was always seeking to improve but sometimes it was difficult because they needed to borrow instruments. He clarified that there had been difficulties in some members of the band attending the rehearsal hut due to asthma related health problems. He referred to the need of the Band to have their own tympanum and

explained that the application for grant aid was in two parts, being a financial contribution towards tympanum and assistance in running a workshop.

The Chair thanked the members of the public for their statements, advising that these would be taken into account when considering the respective grant applications.

Ab.28 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC UNDER STANDING ORDER 32

None.

Ab.29 TARGETING GRANTS FOR THE BENEFIT OF ABINGDON AREA

The Committee had before it report 219/05 of the Strategic Director on targeting grants for the benefit of Abingdon and the surrounding area.

RESOLVED

that consideration of this report be deferred to the next meeting of the Committee.

Ab.30 COMMUNITY GRANTS

The Committee received and considered report 220/05 of the Strategic Director, the purpose of which was to set out the current budget position for this Committee in respect of community grants and to invite Members to consider and determine the grant applications received since the last meeting.

The Committee noted that the budget position was £14,350.12. One Member referred to the proportioning of the budget across the environmental, social and economic agenda and proposed that the funds be re-proportioned as necessary. The Committee supported this suggestion.

The Committee considered the grant applications set out in the report and made specific comments as follows:-

1. Abingdon Jazz Club

It was noted that the Town Council had given a grant of £100 towards publicity.

There was some concern that a membership fee was not charged and it was suggested that an informative be added to any grant offer suggesting that this should be considered.

It was proposed by Councillor Mary de Vere and seconded by Councillor Laurel Symons that a grant of £200 be awarded but this was lost by 6 votes to 4, with 1 abstention.

It was then proposed by Councillor Mike Badcock that no grant be offered but this was not seconded.

2. Abingdon Decorative and Fine Arts

(Councillor Tony de Vere had declared a personal interest in this item and in accordance with Standing Order 34 he remained in the meeting during its consideration).

Members supported the application.

3. Abbey Brass

The grant award of the Town Council was unknown. Reference was made to the comments of the Vale's Art Development Officer and it was considered that her advice and guidance should be offered on publicity and sustainability of the group. It was noted that the concern had been that the building used was in a poor condition and high levels of expenditure were required on maintenance.

It was proposed by Councillor Mike Badcock that a grant be offered up to the amount requested less any amount given by the Town Council with the Strategic Director being delegated authority to approve this, but this was not supported.

4. Abingdon Musical Festival Association

The Committee had regard to the statement made earlier in the meeting by the member of the public.

Members supported the application but considered that young people should be encouraged to attend.

5. Abingdon Concert Band

The Committee had regard to the statement made earlier in the meeting by a member of the public.

The Committee questioned the level of financial assistance sought and furthermore it was commented that a pair of tympanums might be available from another source.

At this point in the meeting it was

RESOLVED

(a) that the meeting of the Committee do adjourn for five minutes to enable clarification to be sought from the applicant regarding a number of questions raised.

The meeting adjourned at 7.55pm.

The meeting reconvened at 8.00pm.

The Committee noted that a membership fee was charged and that following research into a set of tympanum which might be available it had become apparent that they were unsuitable.

6. 7 Dorchester Crescent

A photograph of the trees was displayed at the meeting. Members supported the application.

7. Tree Works – Shelley Court, Abingdon

The Committee recalled that the owners of Shelley Court, Abingdon had been awarded a grant of £200 under delegated authority from this Committee towards the carrying

out of works to various trees located around the Court covered by Tree Preservation Orders. In view of the size of the trees, their proximity to neighbouring properties and the resulting high maintenance costs, an application had now been received for additional funding and the Committee was asked to reconsider the application. The Committee supported the proposal, noting the extent of the works which had included the hiring of a crane and the need to employ trained people to undertake their maintenance.

It was proposed by Councillor Jim Halliday that a further grant of £600, totalling £800, be offered towards the work. However, this was not seconded.

Councillor Julie Mayhew-Archer proposed that a total grant of £500 be awarded towards the work but this was not seconded.

8. Abingdon Town Council Twinning Activities – Service Level Agreement – Grant Payment

(Councillor Jim Halliday had declared a personal interest in this item and in accordance with Standing Order 34 he remained in the meeting during its consideration.)

(Councillors Julie Mayhew-Archer, Peter Jones and Monica Lovatt had each declared a personal and prejudicial interest in part of this item and in accordance with Standing Order 34 they withdrew from the meeting during consideration of that part.)

Councillor Jim Halliday, the Vice-Chair in the Chair.

The Committee noted that the Twinning Officer had resigned but it was hoped that a replacement officer would be appointed soon. The Committee welcomed the report of the Town Council but considered that it would have been useful to have received a statement from a representative of the Town Council as further points of clarification were needed. The Committee recalled that at the last meeting details of the Service Level Agreement had been received and it was commented that civic functions should be highlighted separately. Members considered that it would be useful to receive details of how many societies had been helped and how many individuals had benefited. To this end, the Committee considered that the Town Council should be requested to write a more detailed report to the meeting of the Committee next year.

RESOLVED

- (b) *that the Committee's current budget of £14,350.12 be noted;*
- (c) *that such funds as are required be transferred from the economic priority to the social priority to meet the grant awards as set out below (agreed by 9 votes to nil, with 2 abstentions);*
- (d) *that the following grants be awarded:-*

<u>Applicant</u>	<u>Scheme</u>	<u>Grant / Decision</u>
Abingdon Jazz Club	Monthly jazz events	£100 subject to the club being recommended to consider charging a membership fee (Social Agenda / Town and Village Vitality Priority) (proposed by Councillor Roz Smith, seconded)

<u>Applicant</u>	<u>Scheme</u>	<u>Grant / Decision</u>
		by Councillor Peter Jones and agreed by 8 votes to 2, with 1 abstention)
Abingdon Decorative and Fine Arts	An exhibition of children's art as part of the Charter celebrations	£500 (Social Agenda / Town and Village Vitality Priority) (proposed by Councillor Mike Badcock, seconded by Councillor Monica Lovatt and agreed by 10 votes to nil, with 1 abstention)
Abbey Brass	Repairs to the band room portacabins	£500, with the Vale's Arts Development Officer being requested to offer advice and guidance on publicity and sustainability of the group (Social Agenda / Town and Village Vitality Priority) (proposed by Councillor Roz Smith, seconded by Councillor Jim Halliday, and agreed by 10 votes to nil, with 1 abstention)
Abingdon Musical Festival Association	A concerto class	£400 subject to the Association encouraging young people to attend perhaps by way of reduced ticket prices (Social Agenda / Town and Village Vitality Priority) (proposed by Councillor Janet Morgan, seconded by Councillor Gervase Duffield and agreed by 10 votes to nil, with 1 abstention)
Abingdon Concert Band	The purchase of tympanums and the hosting of a play day to attract new members	That consideration of the application be deferred pending further information on other grant applications sought, but that it be agreed in principle a grant of up to £1,000 subject to discussions with the applicant regarding other funding sources and the Vale Arts Development Officer being asked to give advice on publicity and sustainability of the group (proposed by Councillor Roz Smith, seconded by Councillor Janet Morgan and agreed by 10 votes to nil, with 1 abstention)
		Underwriting of up to £100 (Social Agenda/Town and Village Vitality Priority) (proposed by Councillor Jim Halliday, seconded by Councillor Laurel Symons and agreed by 10 votes to nil, with 1 abstention)
7 Dorchester Crescent	Tree maintenance	£44.64 (Environmental Agenda/Town and Village Vitality Priority) (proposed by Councillor Tony de Vere, seconded by Councillor Gervase

<u>Applicant</u>	<u>Scheme</u>	<u>Grant / Decision</u>
		<i>Duffield and agreed by 7 votes to 2, with 1 abstention, with one of the voting Members not being present during consideration of this item)</i>
<i>Shelley Court, Abingdon</i>	<i>Works to various trees located around the court covered by Tree Preservation Orders</i>	<i>A further £200 (Environmental Agenda / Town And Village Vitality Priority) (proposed by Councillor Laurel Symons, seconded by Councillor Gervase Duffield, and agreed by 8 votes to 1, with 1 abstention, with one of the voting Members not being present during consideration of this item)</i>

- (e) *that it be noted that the supplementary guidance for grants supporting historic buildings, works on trees, countryside conservation and parish cleansing has been agreed and will be available in the near future;*
- (f) *that the report from Abingdon Town Council on its Twinning Activities be received and a grant of £2,500 agreed under the Service Level Agreement be paid, but that the Town Council be requested to prepare a more detailed report for consideration by the Committee next year, preferably with an Officer from the Town Council being invited to attend to make a presentation to the Committee (agreed by 6 votes to 1, with four of the voting Members not being present during consideration of this item).*

Ab.31 URGENT BUSINESS - ABINGDON SCIENCE PARTNERSHIP - SCHOOLS' 2006 SCIENCE FAIR - GRANT APPLICATION

(Councillors Laurel Symons, Janet Morgan, Tony de Vere and Mary de Vere had each declared a personal interest in part of this item and in accordance with Standing Order 34 they remained in the meeting during its consideration.)

(Councillor Mike Badcock had declared a personal and prejudicial interest in this item and in accordance with Standing Order 34 he withdrew from the meeting during its consideration.)

As referred to elsewhere in these minutes the Chair had agreed to accept this as an item of urgent business.

The Committee had regard to a letter from the Community Strategy Officer dated 25 January 2006, circulated prior to the meeting, setting out a request for grant aid towards the Abingdon Science Partnership Schools 2006 Science Fair. The Committee also had regard to the statement made earlier in the meeting by a member of the public.

Members supported the initiative but some concern was expressed that the application fell outside the grants criteria in that support was being sought towards the cost of teacher cover for the classmates of the children who would attend the fair. Members considered that this was a County Council responsibility, although it was noted that education was an important block in the community strategy and a case could be made that supporting education was appropriate.

Councillor Gervase Duffield expressed his concern that this Council should seek to support an initiative which was the County Council's responsibility and asked that this be so recorded in the minutes.

Members sought clarification as to other grant assistance applied for, at which point it was proposed by the Chair and

RESOLVED

- (a) *that the meeting of the Committee do adjourn for five minutes to enable the applicant to answer questions of clarification.*

The meeting adjourned at 8.19pm.

The meeting reconvened at 8.24pm.

By 7 votes to 1, with 2 abstentions, and 1 of the voting Members not being present during consideration of this item, it was

RESOLVED

- (b) *that a grant of up to £1,800 be offered, such an amount to be reduced by the amounts awarded from other organisations for the same purpose (Economic Agenda/ Town and Village Vitality Priority);*
- (c) *that it be agreed that the grant award is a one off grant made due to the exceptional circumstances in this case.*

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

None.

The meeting rose at 9.10pm