

Date: 23 January 2006

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 **WEDNESDAY, 1ST FEBRUARY, 2006** 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

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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 record the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 11 October 2005, (previously circulated with the Council Summons dated 14 December 2005).

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. Targeting Grants for the Benefit of Abingdon Area

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

(Page 6)

Introduction & Report Summary

At its meetings on 13th July and 11th October the Abingdon Area Committee resolved that it should further consider the idea of a prospectus setting out the Committee's priorities in giving support to the local community.

This report provides further information which will assist the Committee in developing the prospectus.

The contact officer for this report is Toby Warren, Head of Innovation & Enterprise (Tel: 01235 547695).

Recommendations

(a) *Members are requested to determine the final content of the prospectus.*

- (b) *Members are requested to determine the need to convene an Abingdon Area Forum meeting in order to facilitate public consultation on the content of the prospectus.*

8. 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 7 - 22)

Introduction and Report Summary

The purpose of this report is 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 contact officer for this report is Lorna Edwards, Community Strategy Officer (Tel: 01235 547626).

Recommendations

- (a) *Members are asked to note that the Committee's current budget is £13,850.12*
- (b) *Members are asked to determine the grant award, the agenda and the Council priority in respect of the following:*
- (i) *Abingdon Jazz Club, £500, towards the cost of monthly jazz events, Social Agenda, Town & Village Vitality priority*
 - (ii) *Abingdon Decorative & Fine Arts, £500, towards an exhibition of children's art as part of the Charter celebrations, Social Agenda, Town & Village vitality priority*
 - (iii) *Abbey Brass, £500, towards the cost of repairs to the band-room portacabins, Social Agenda, Town & Village Vitality priority*
 - (iv) *Abingdon Musical Festival Association, £400, towards the cost of a concerto class, Social Agenda, Town & Village Vitality priority*
 - (v) *Abingdon Concert Band, £2,400, towards the cost of buying timpanis and putting on a play day to attract new members, Social Agenda, Town & Village Vitality priority*
 - (vi) *7 Dorchester Crescent, a grant towards the cost of tree maintenance, Environmental Agenda, Town & Village Vitality priority*
- (c) *Members are asked to reconsider the application for tree maintenance considered at the meeting on 11 October to determine whether, in the light of further information, the award of an additional grant is appropriate.*
- (d) *Members are asked to note that supplementary guidance for grants supporting historic buildings, work on trees, countryside conservation and parish cleansing has been agreed and will be available to them in the near future*
- (e) *Members are asked to receive the report from Abingdon Town Council on their twinning activities and determine whether the grant of £2,500 agreed under the Service Level Agreement can be paid.*

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

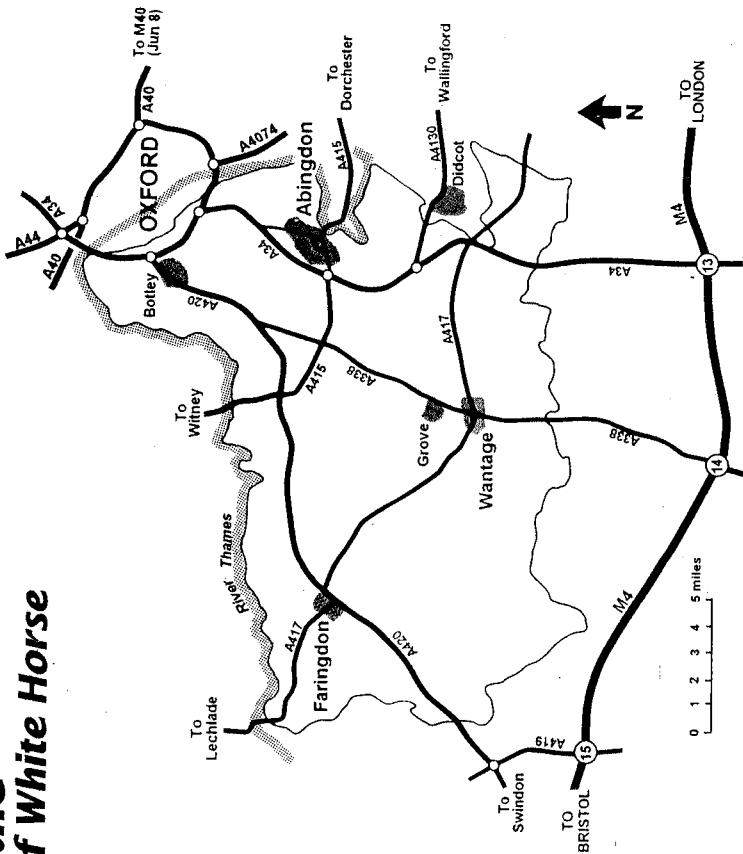
Create a safer community and improve the quality of life among Vale residents

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

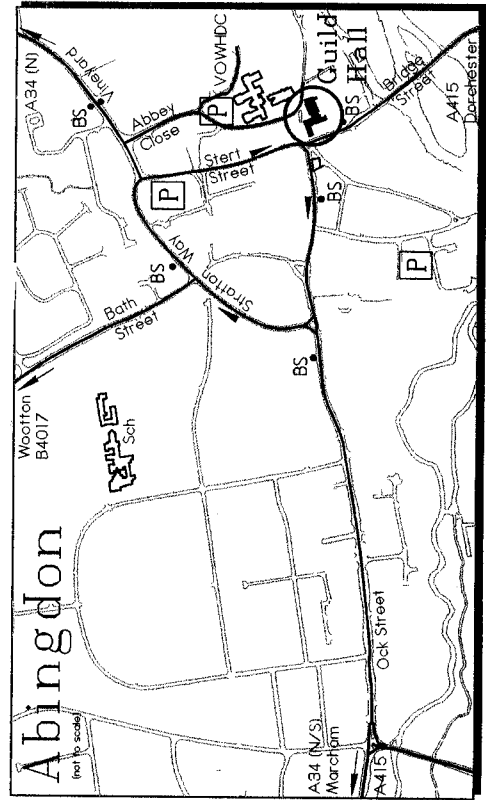
Help disadvantaged groups and individuals within the Vale to realise their full potential

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
1 FEBRUARY 2006

Targeting Grants for the Benefit of Abingdon & Area

1.0 Introduction & Report Summary

- 1.1 At its meetings on 13th July and 11th October the Abingdon Area Committee resolved that it should further consider the idea of a prospectus setting out the Committee's priorities in giving support to the local community.
- 1.2 This report provides further information which will assist the Committee in developing the prospectus.
- 1.3 The contact officer for this report is Toby Warren, Head of Innovation & Enterprise (Tel: 01235 547695).

2.0 Recommendations

- (a) *Members are requested to determine the final content of the prospectus.*
- (b) *Members are requested to determine the need to convene an Abingdon Area Forum meeting in order to facilitate public consultation on the content of the prospectus.*

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 any Council policy.

4.0 The Prospectus

- 4.1 The draft prospectus now has an introduction which is designed to explain the role of the Area Committee in relation to the Vale Community Strategy and the Oxfordshire Local Area Agreement. The introduction also makes it clear that the Committee has a limited budget but may be able to offer a suitable project a small financial grant. The Committee may also be able to help in other ways by supporting applications to other funding bodies and publicising the benefits of a project.

5.0 Conclusion

- 5.1. The Area Committee can demonstrate its community leadership role by championing projects that promote community self help and are consistent with the priorities of the Vale Community Strategy.
- 5.2 The prospectus will act as guide for applicants as it will indicate the Committee's priorities for support. However when the prospectus is published it should be made clear that each application is determined on its individual merits and the Committee is free to support project activity which is not mentioned in the prospectus.

TOBY WARREN
HEAD OF INNOVATION & ENTERPRISE

TIM SADLER
STRATEGIC DIRECTOR

REPORT OF THE STRATEGIC DIRECTOR
TO THE ABINGDON AREA COMMITTEE
1 FEBRUARY 2005

Community Grants

1.0 Introduction and Report Summary

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is 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.
- 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 Committee's current budget is £13,850.12*
- (b) *Members are asked to determine the grant award, the agenda and the Council priority in respect of the following:*
- (i) **Abingdon Jazz Club, £500**, towards the cost of monthly jazz events, Social Agenda, Town & Village Vitality priority
 - (ii) **Abingdon Decorative & Fine Arts, £500**, towards an exhibition of children's art as part of the Charter celebrations, Social Agenda, Town & Village vitality priority
 - (iii) **Abbey Brass, £500**, towards the cost of repairs to the band-room portacabins, Social Agenda, Town & Village Vitality priority
 - (iv) **Abingdon Musical Festival Association, £400**, towards the cost of a concerto class, Social Agenda, Town & Village Vitality priority
 - (v) **Abingdon Concert Band, £2,400**, towards the cost of buying timpanis and putting on a play day to attract new members, Social Agenda, Town & Village Vitality priority
 - (vi) **7 Dorchester Crescent**, a grant towards the cost of tree maintenance, Environmental Agenda, Town & Village Vitality priority
- (c) *Members are asked to reconsider the application for tree maintenance considered at the meeting on 11 October to determine whether, in the light of further information, the award of an additional grant is appropriate*
- (d) *Members are asked to note that supplementary guidance for grants supporting historic buildings, work on trees, countryside conservation and parish cleansing has been agreed and will be available to them in the near future*
- (e) *Members are asked to receive the report from Abingdon Town Council on their twinning activities and determine whether the grant of £2,500 agreed under the Service Level Agreement can be paid*

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 any Council policy.

4.0 Budget

4.1 The current budget position for this Committee for the year 2005/06 is as follows:

Budget b/f from 2004/05	Budget 2005/06	Total budget 2005/06	Environmental Agenda Proportion	Social Agenda Proportion	Economic Agenda Proportion	Discretionary Proportion
£8,231.12	£ 30,618	£38,849.12	£10,716.30	£10,716.30	£3,061.80	£6,123.60 + £8,231.12
	Allocated	£24,499.00	£1,929.00	£10,716.30 (+ £2,032.58 from discretionary)	£1,000	£10,853.70
	Remaining	£14,350.12	£8,787.30	£0	£2,061.80	£3,501.02

The amount remaining is net of the £2,500 SLA twinning grant for Abingdon Town Council which was earmarked at the beginning of the year.

Furthermore, the grant of £500 awarded to the Abingdon Marathon in July 2005 as a guarantee against loss has not been required due to the success of the event, so this amount has been included in the total remaining to be reallocated.

5.0 Community Grants

5.1 Applications have been received in respect of the following organisations and there are narratives providing additional details at Appendix A to the report. Although all the grant applications are for £500 or less and would normally be determined under delegated authority by the Head of Innovation & Enterprise in consultation with the Chair, since a Committee meeting was imminent and since five of the six grants are for arts events or projects, it was felt that the Committee would welcome the opportunity to discuss them.

Members are invited to consider and determine the grant awards, the Council agenda and priority for the applications listed below. In accordance with Members' wishes, no officer recommendation has been provided for the level of grant for the application for tree maintenance work. However, details of the level of grant awarded in the past for such grants is included in the attached narratives.

5.2 Reconsideration of grant application from Gordon Hudson & Co for tree maintenance in Shelley Court, Abingdon

At the last meeting of the Abingdon Area Committee held on 11 October an application was considered from Gordon Hudson & Co concerning tree maintenance on a group of trees at Shelley Court, Abingdon. Authority was delegated to the Head of Innovation & Enterprise in consultation with the Chair of the Committee to award a grant of up to £200 subject to checking the detail of the number of trees under a Tree Preservation Order. The grant awarded represents 10% of the total cost of the works and is in line with the grants towards tree maintenance/safety which have been awarded by the Abingdon Area Committee in the current financial year.

5.3 Shortly after the meeting the Chair of the meeting met the applicant and was shown the trees in question. Following discussions between the Chair and relevant officers it was agreed to award a grant of £200 in accordance with the delegated authority. Since the trees are

substantial, some of them are very close to the properties and the resulting maintenance costs are high, and since the Committee had not been aware of this fact when the original application had been considered, the Chair is asking the Committee to reconsider the application. Photos of the trees and a plan of their location will be circulated at the meeting.

5.4 Members are asked to view the photos, reconsider the application and determine whether their original award, which has been paid, was appropriate or whether, in the light of additional information, they consider it appropriate to make an additional award. A narrative providing further details is attached at Appendix B.

5.5 Changes in criteria to grants supporting historic buildings, work on trees, countryside conservation and parish cleansing

During the current financial year the Council has undertaken a review of the Community Grants criteria and adopted revised criteria at the Council meeting on 20 July 2005. Since then the Executive portfolio-holder for Community Enterprise has been in discussion with officers regarding the provision of supplementary guidance for applicants wishing to apply for a grant to support historic buildings, work on trees, countryside conservation and parish cleansing, all of which had been the subject of individual grant schemes in the past prior to the merging of grant monies into one scheme, the Community Grants Scheme.

5.6 At a meeting on 20 December 2005 the Executive portfolio-holder for Community Enterprise reviewed and agreed changes to the criteria for grants that support historic buildings restoration, work on trees or countryside conservation and parish cleansing work. The changed criteria emphasise that the grants are discretionary and any amount awarded will depend on the available budget and the priorities of the respective committee. However it is hoped that all area committees will be consistent in the use of the revised criteria.

5.7 Some aspects of the revised criteria will require legal clearance but it is hoped that this can be achieved by March in time for the last cycle of Committee meetings in this financial year. It is also hoped that a revised supplementary guidance leaflet for historic buildings will be available on Valeweb and in hard copy format for use by councillors and residents alike by the end of March.

5.8 Members are asked to note that supplementary guidance for grants supporting the areas named above has been agreed and will be available to them in the near future.

5.9 Service Level Agreements with Abingdon Town Council and the Abingdon & District Twin Towns Society

In accordance with the resolution passed on 11 October 2005 by this Committee, the Head of Innovation & Enterprise can confirm that the twinning Service Level Agreements for the Town Council and Abingdon & District Twin Towns Society require that both consult each other and work in partnership in order to develop community twinning and avoid duplication of activities.

5.10 Furthermore, as requested, Abingdon Town Council has provided a report outlining the Town Council's involvement in twinning activities between 1 December 2004 and 30 November 2005. The report is attached at Appendix C.

5.11 Abingdon Town Council is involved in community as well as civic twinning. Its community twinning programme is designed to be accessible and relevant to all residents of Abingdon. The Town Council is also keen to use twinning to develop links between businesses in Abingdon and its twin towns.

5.12 Abingdon & District Twin Towns Society community twinning programme is designed to be of particular interest to its membership who pay a subscription in order to support its activities.

- 5.13 Members are asked to determine whether the Service Level Agreement grant of £2,500 can be paid to Abingdon Town Council for the year 2005/06. This amount was allocated in the budget at the beginning of the financial year.

TOBY WARREN
HEAD OF INNOVATION & ENTERPRISE

TIM SADLER
STRATEGIC DIRECTOR

Background papers: grant applications and grant update

(i) Applicant: Abingdon Jazz Club

The Abingdon Jazz Club was set up four months ago and is seeking funding to subsidise monthly jazz events held in the King's Head and Bell public house function room which is smoke-free. The events feature a regular trio plus guest soloist.

The aims of the club are to promote live jazz in Abingdon in a smoke-free environment and to give local musicians more employment opportunities.

The Club endeavours to feature musicians who live within an approximate 20 mile radius of Abingdon. The events are advertised countywide but especially in Abingdon, so attract audiences from a similar radius. It is estimated that there are around 20 residents from the Vale of White Horse area who are involved. The Club is publicised on Radio Oxford and Fox FM, Abingdon library and local shops in Abingdon as well as by a mailing using the Oxfordshire Jazz Federation's mailing list.

The Club has no membership fee, instead there is a charge on the door of £5 (£3 for concessions).

There used to be weekly live jazz events in Abingdon which attracted 15-20 people. These stopped in the Spring of 2005 and the same audience now come to The Abingdon Jazz Club. The Grapes pub runs a monthly jazz event with no entrance charge but this is a smoky environment and features musicians from other parts of the country so it does not particularly support local musicians. Nonetheless, the Abingdon Jazz Club is considering collaborating with them on publicity.

This application supports the following strands of the Vale Community Strategy: Recreation, Culture and Leisure, Safe and Supportive Communities, Town and Village Vitality, Education and Life long Learning.

Financial Information:

Total Project Cost	£1,000 p.a. excluding VAT (VAT cannot be reclaimed)
Balances	Deficit of £64.61 at 31.12.05
Running Costs	Estimated at £1,000 p.a.
Own Contribution	None as they aim to break even
Grant Sought	£500
Previous Awards (Vale)	None
Parish Council Support	Abingdon Town Council £100 for publicity
Parish Precept	£706,402 £57.87 Band 'D'
Other Support	Has enquired about grants from the following without success: Oxfordshire Jazz Federation – no funds this year Musicians' Union – not eligible because Club doesn't pay minimum wage & isn't a member Performing Rights Society – only give grants for playing new compositions The Arts Council – only fund new art

Officer comment: Abigail Brown (Arts Development Officer)

The Abingdon Jazz Club provides an important activity for Abingdon's social calendar. Not only does this activity support local professional musicians, but attracts audiences into the centre of Abingdon. A grant would make a difference to the activity and the group and would have great benefits to Abingdon.

The group is struggling to break even during this period where they establish themselves and it is only reasonable that a small public subsidy is given initially, however it is really important to spend some of this money on publicity as well as musicians' fees.

This activity assists the delivery of the following Arts Development aims;

- Encourage a diverse range of arts activities in rural Areas
- Support the Voluntary arts community
- Encouraging partnerships between the arts and non-arts related areas
- Use the arts to improve the physical environment

(ii) Applicant: Abingdon Decorative and Fine Arts Society

The Society includes amongst its aims the promotion of the Arts of all types within the local area. As part of Abingdon's Charter Celebrations, the Society is planning to sponsor a children's art exhibition. The exhibitors will be local primary and secondary school children, aged between 5-14 yrs. Their work will be exhibited in the Long Gallery, Abingdon, for one week in June 2006. Entrance to the exhibition will be free.

The Society will provide sponsorship of £75 towards materials to each of the ten primary schools in Abingdon. Students from John Mason have offered to help set up the exhibition.

It is believed that the exhibition will strengthen bonds between local primary and secondary schools through the media of art.

This application supports the following strands of the Vale Community Strategy: Recreation, Culture & Leisure, Town & Village Vitality, Education & Lifelong Learning, Safe & Supportive Communities

Financial Information:

Total Project Cost	£1,625 (no VAT payable)
Balances	£7,370 at 31.12.04
Running Costs	£27,133.60 for calendar year 2004
Own Contribution	£825
Grant Sought	£500
Previous Awards (Vale)	None
Parish Council Support	Abingdon Town Council £300
Parish Precept	£706,402 £57.87 Band 'D'

Officer comment: Abigail Brown (Arts Development Officer)

Abingdon Decorative and Fine Arts Society (ADFAS) have proposed an excellent project that includes the wider community in the exciting opportunities of creating art and celebrating the local heritage and a significant historical celebration of the town. This project is an inspired way to celebrate Abingdon's Charter anniversary year.

It encourages schools and local children to look at the local identity and create art with artists as well as profiling work to the larger public.

- ADFAS is a well run and managed voluntary group who I have every confidence in running a project of this scale. The project will receive considerable in kind support from the local schools and arts infrastructure. The Town Council has already agreed to support the project and therefore a grant from the Vale will be very well spent and a great boost to the project.

This project will support the following aims of the Arts Development Strategy and programme;

- Encourage a diverse range of arts activities in rural Areas
- Support the Voluntary arts community
- Encouraging partnerships between the arts and non-arts related areas
- Use the arts to improve the physical environment

(iii) Applicant: Abbey Brass

Abbey Brass has been running for twenty-two years. The band purchased its "hut" (five portacabins joined together) second-hand about fifteen years ago and uses it for weekly rehearsals and storing instruments and music. Other musical groups hire the hut for rehearsing. The premises are estimated to be about thirty to forty years old. The terms of the lease require the band to keep the premises in good repair.

At present, the outside 'skin' is rotten in many places and needs immediate attention to prevent further deterioration. Recently a hole was kicked in the door.

Abbey Brass is seeking a grant towards the cost of re-skinning the premises with painted external plywood sheets to prevent water ingress and discourage further acts of vandalism and prolong the life of the premises. The band intends to raise sufficient funds to build a new band room but estimates that this could take 5-7 years.

The band currently has around 65 members and attracts musicians from Abingdon and surrounding villages. A membership fee of £40 p.a. is charged. Learners from any part of the community are welcome as long as they have a desire to learn to play, and where membership fees pose a barrier these are waived.

The band's reserves are used to buy instruments to re-equip the band; general maintenance of the premises is covered in the band's running costs but this does not include sufficient funds for such a large repair.

The band has investigated other sources of funding but has not been able to locate one that will provide grants for repairs to this type of building.

This application supports the following strands of the Vale Community Strategy: Recreation, Culture & Leisure, Town & Village Vitality, Education & Lifelong Learning and Safe & Supportive Communities

Financial Information:

Total Project Cost	£1,695 including VAT, £1,400 excluding VAT VAT cannot be reclaimed
Balances	£8,942.94 at 05.04.05
Running Costs	£6,456.22 for year ending 05.04.05
Own Contribution	£695 plus labour
Grant Sought	£500
Previous Awards (Vale)	£500 towards repairing the roof 2004/05
Parish Council Support	Applied to Abingdon Town Council for a grant of £500
Parish Precept	£706,402 £57.87 Band 'D'

Officer comment: Abigail Brown (Arts Development Officer)

As a significant part of the musical infrastructure in Abingdon, repairs to this venue are important. There are very few grants elsewhere that can be applied for, for repairs to buildings. Although the building is old and will be replaced in due course this grant will fund emergency relief for short term repairs to be carried out. This grant will assist the group to prolong the life of this building in order to make time to fundraise for a new building.

It is significant that Abbey Brass sometimes waiver membership fees in order to make sure that disadvantaged residents can enjoy musical activity.

This project assists the delivery of the following Arts Development aims:

- Support the Voluntary arts community

It is recommended that any grant awarded is subject to the band seeking advice and guidance from the Vale's Arts Development Officer on publicity and the sustainability of the group.

(iv) Applicant: Abingdon Music Festival Association

The Abingdon Music Festival Association runs an annual weekend workshop with professional adjudicators and classes for all ages and standards from beginners upwards. Last year they tried out a new venture which was outside the weekend workshop, which involved collaboration with the Abingdon Symphony Orchestra. Following the success of the venture and the eagerness and enthusiasm generated, the Abingdon Music Festival Association is keen to repeat the venture in 2006 and is seeking a grant towards the organising costs. Last year most of the costs were covered by a grant from Awards for All.

The venture was the provision of a concerto class which required candidates to perform a concerto movement of their own choosing accompanied by a professional pianist. Two runners up were given the chance to perform with the Abingdon Symphony Orchestra in a workshop. The winner was invited to give a full concert performance of a concerto to an audience of 200 – 300 people later in the year.

Although several local festivals offer a concerto class, only Abingdon is working in collaboration with the town's symphony orchestra, thus enabling successful candidates to proceed to a full performance. There are very few opportunities for young musicians to gain experience by playing as a soloist with a full symphony orchestra and the Abingdon Music Festival Association is filling this gap.

It is estimated there would be around ten participants each paying a £20 entry fee.

This application supports the following strands of the Vale Community Strategy: Recreation, Culture & Leisure, Town & Village Vitality, Education & Lifelong Learning, Safe & Supportive Communities.

Financial Information:

Total Project Cost	£1,520 including VAT; £1,457 excluding VAT
Balances	£3,425.81 at 30.04.05 primarily for the annual weekend festival
Running Costs	£3,639.50 for year ending 30.04.05
Own Contribution	£320, plus £128 printing costs and Committee members' time provided in-kind
Grant Sought	£ 400
Previous Awards (Vale)	2003/04 £492; 2004/05 £375.00 towards a Composer's Workshop
Parish Council Support	Abingdon Town Council £250
Parish Precept	£706,402 £57.87 Band 'D'
Other Support	Have applied to 4 different funders plus a few local businesses, without either success or a reply.

Officer comment: Abigail Brown (Arts Development Officer)

This application enhances and supports much of the work of the Arts Development programme. This is a wonderful project that takes advantage of the creativity of other local groups and culminates in a programme of work that encourages young people to take part in music making and public performing with professional tuition and high profile performances. Opportunities created by this group would not happen without public funding. This particular project creates a unique partnership between the Abingdon Music Festival and the Abingdon Symphony Orchestra, creating music on a scale not normally performed in Abingdon.

This project assists the delivery of the following Arts Development aims:

- Encourage a diverse range of arts activities in rural Areas
- Support the Voluntary arts community
- Encouraging partnerships between the arts and non-arts related areas
- Use the arts to improve the physical environment

(v) Applicant: Abingdon Concert Band

Abingdon Concert Band is a concert wind band composed of approximately 30 regular volunteers who rehearse on a weekly basis and give concerts in the local community. The Band is seeking funding towards the cost of buying a pair of timpanis and the organisation of a Play Day in February 2006.

The Band has stopped using the Abbey Brass hut for rehearsals since some members had noticed that their asthma was aggravated by the musty conditions there. The Band used to hire the timpanis for a small fee from Abbey Brass but as they have moved their rehearsal venue this is no longer practical.

The timpanis are an integral part of the band and will be used on an ongoing basis. At the moment, without the timpanis, one of the band's percussionists is "redundant" and the band's music repertoire is limited. The new timpanis will be kept at the new rehearsal venue and locked away securely when not in use. They will be covered on the Band's insurance.

The chair of the Band is new to fundraising. He has applied to Abingdon Town Council for £2,200 for the timpanis and had applied to the Vale for the same amount; he is in the process of applying to Awards For All for the same amount on the basis that if one application is unsuccessful they still have at least one other chance. The chair is aware that if they are successful in more than one of their applications they will not be able to claim more than £2,200 in total. After discussion, the chair of the Band has agreed that the Band could contribute a maximum of £500 towards the timpanis, which reduces his application to the Vale to £1,700 as shown. He understands that if his Awards for All application is successful he will not need a grant from the Vale (or Abingdon Town Council) towards the cost of the timpanis.

The Band is also seeking funding towards the cost of organising a Play Day to improve the musicianship of the existing members and to encourage new members to join the band. Whilst the costs are known, the income from the event is not. The intention is to keep the participation cost as low as possible, possibly £5 per person, to be as inclusive as possible.

This application supports the following strands of the Vale Community Strategy: Recreation, Culture & Leisure, Town & Village Vitality and Education & Lifelong Learning, Safe & Supportive Communities.

Financial Information:

Total Project Cost	£2,200 including VAT, £1,900 excluding VAT for pair of timpanis; £200 (no VAT) Play Day Workshop
Balances	£2,386.05 at 31.08.05
Running Costs	£2,852 approx p.a.
Own Contribution	Maximum £500 towards timpani purchase
Grant Sought	£1,700 towards purchase of timpanis plus Contribution towards shortfall of £75 - £100 on Play Day
Previous Awards (Vale)	£381 2003/04 for musical accessories; £500 2004/05 for instrument maintenance
Parish Council Support	Has applied to Abingdon Town Council for £2,200 (outcome awaited); in the process of applying to Awards for All for £2,200.
Parish Precept	£706,402 £57.87 Band 'D'

Officer comment: Abigail Brown (Arts Development Officer):

This request for further equipment, if granted, will assist and encourage new participants to join in with the activities of the group. Music equipment is very expensive and sometimes prohibits new participants.

This project assists the delivery of the following Arts Development aims:

- Support the Voluntary arts community

It is recommended that any grant awarded is subject to the band seeking advice and guidance from the Vale's Arts Development Officer on publicity and the sustainability of the group.

(vi) Applicant: owner of 7 Dorchester Crescent, Abingdon

Outline of work

The owner of 7 Dorchester Crescent is seeking a grant towards a 20% crown reduction of a weeping willow tree in her front garden.

Details of former Tree Preservation Grant Scheme

Trees covered by a Tree Preservation Order (TPO) are generally large, significant trees of public amenity value which are located on private land. A TPO does not mean that the owner is not allowed to carry out any work on the tree, on the contrary, some people think the name should be changed to a Tree Management Order, so that the trees are well-maintained.

Some years ago the District Council agreed to help towards the maintenance of these important trees by giving grant aid to approved works to trees which were the subject of a TPO. This has been an excellent incentive to have the trees maintained and for the work to be carried out to the proper British Standards.

When an application is received it is evaluated by the Council's Arboricultural Officer to establish its suitability. In the past grants of up to 40% of eligible works were recommended on approved tree surgery work that was carried out to BS 3998. The completed work was inspected by the Arboricultural Officer to ensure it met the standard before a grant request was submitted to the Area Committee.

Financial Information:

Total cost of work: £111.63 incl VAT

Officer Comment: (George Reade, Arboriculture Officer)

The tree is easily visible to the public. The works are reasonable to help maintain the tree in good health.

Applicant: Gordon Hudson & Co, Friars Entry, Oxford

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Outline of work

The owners of Shelley Court, Abingdon were awarded a grant of £200 under delegated authority from the Abingdon Area Committee. They are seeking an additional award towards carrying out works to various trees located around the Court which are covered by Tree Preservation Orders in view of the size of the trees, their nearness to the properties and the resulting high maintenance cost

Financial Information:

Total cost of work: £2,062.13

Under the Tree Preservation Grant Scheme grants were awarded on the basis of up to 40% of the cost of eligible works.

Officer Comment (George Reade, Arboriculture Officer):

This group of trees forms a valuable public amenity around Shelley Court. The cedar tree requires quite a lot of safety works.

ABINGDON TOWN COUNCIL

Report on twinning activities, 1st December 2004 to 30th November 2005

- Jenny Norris was appointed part-time Twinning Officer from December 2004.
- The Twinning Officer has provided information and assistance to individuals and organisations in the community who wish to visit the twin towns, and likewise to individuals and organisations from the twin towns who wish to visit the Abingdon area.
- As well as providing practical assistance and advice, the Council has also assisted community-based groups financially. During the period covered by this report the Town Council has awarded grants to five societies and groups, to help them to take part in activities in our twin towns. The total awarded in twinning grants for this period is £1,045.
- The Twinning Officer has worked in close partnership with the Abingdon and District Twin Towns Society (ADTTS). This has involved regular contact and communication with the Society including attending committee meetings of the Society, regular meetings with officers of the ADTTS and working together with the Society on specific matters.
- Two joint forums between the Town Council and the ADTTS were held in February and October 2005. At these meetings there have been discussions regarding items of joint interest. These meetings have been valuable in the exchange of information and looking at ways in which to develop twinning in the community.
- Links have been maintained with the Abingdon's twin towns of Argentan, Schongau and Lucca, as well as Sint-Niklaas and Colmar, through the Vale Five Star Twinning.
- The Mayor, Consort and the Twinning Officer represented the town at the Argentan Quasimodo Fair in April 2005 and the Twinning Conference in Sint-Niklaas in September 2005. Whilst these were primarily civic events, the opportunities for contact to be made with representatives from the twinning and other community-based organisations in the towns involved proved to be valuable.
- The Twinning Officer worked with the ADTTS, to organise an exhibition and evening event, held at John Mason School, for Europe Day in May. This was open to all and no charge was made to those attending. She has also been involved in planning events taking place as part of Argentan's Saison Culturelle. She is presently involved in the planning for the celebration of 450th anniversary of the granting of charter to the town, to be held in June 2006. This will include a celebration of the 50th Anniversary of town twinning between Abingdon and Argentan which it is intended will assist in raising the profile of this twinning link.
- A number of visitors from the Twin Towns, including teachers taking part in a Comenius project with Rush Common School, school students on an exchange visit with John Mason School and people taking part in the Adult Twinning Weekend, have been welcomed by the Mayor at Old Abbey House.
- The Twinning Officer attended a seminar run jointly by the British German Association and the Local Government Information Bureau, on twinning issues.
- The Twinning Officer is working closely with staff at the Information Point at Old Abbey House, to promote twinning.

Nigel Warner, Town Clerk, Abingdon Town Council
20th January 2006