

Minutes

of a meeting of the

Abingdon Area Committee

held on Monday, 24 November 2014 at 6.30 pm
at the Abbey House, Abingdon



Open to the public, including the press

Present:

Members: Councillors Julie Mayhew-Archer (Chair), , Margaret Crick, Tony de Vere, Jeanette Halliday, Jim Halliday, Angela Lawrence, Pat Lonergan, Sandy Lovatt, Helen Pighills, Andrew Skinner, Richard Webber and Elaine Ware

Officers: Carole Cumming, Trudy Godfrey, Susan Harbour, Nicola Meurer, Chris Tyson and Shona Ware

Also present: Councillor Elaine Ware, Cabinet Member for Economy, Leisure and Property

Number of members of the public: 3

Ab.34 Apologies for absence

Councillors Marilyn Badcock, Mike Badcock, Jason Fiddaman and Aidan Melville sent their apologies.

Ab.35 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 28 April 2014 were agreed as a correct record of the meeting and the chair signed them as such.

Ab.36 Declarations of interest

Councillor Tony de Vere stated that, in relation to application CGA\5 – Preston Road Community Centre Association, he is married to the chair of the management committee of the applicant organisation. He would therefore not be taking part in any discussions or voting on this item.

Councillors Helen Pighills, Jeanette Halliday, Sandy Lovatt, Julie Mayhew-Archer, Pat Lonergan and Angela Lawrence all declared a conflict of interest in relation to application NHB\8 – Abingdon-on-Thames Town Council, as they are all Town Councillors and took no part in the discussion or voting. Councillor Jim Halliday stated a personal interest in this application as he lives next to the proposed application venue and would not be taking part in any discussions or voting on this item.

Ab.37 Urgent business and chair's announcements

None.

Ab.38 Statements, petitions and questions from the public relating to matters affecting the area committee.

Organisation	Speaker	Reference
Preston Road Community Association	Mary de Vere	CCGA\5
Abingdon-on-Thames Town Council	Heather Brown	NHBA\8
Music for Autism	Simon Payne	NHBA\1
SOFEA	Richard Kennell	NHBA\10
Friends of Abbey Meadow Outdoor Pool	Dr Peter Harbour	N/A

Ab.39 Capital Community Grants (CCG) 2014/15 (round 2)

The committee considered the head of corporate strategy's report. This set out details of four applications that the council had received for the Capital Community Grant Scheme, requesting a total of £14,128. The report also set out the financial position; there being £34,119 remaining in the current year's budget.

The committee considered each application and awarded grants as follows:

Preston Road Community Centre Association – Ref CCGA\5

New lounge chairs and tables and two fire exit doors.

Grant sought: £3,728

The officer recommendation is to award £3,728, which is 50% of the total project cost based on the grant scoring system.

Tony de Vere did not take part in the discussion or voting as he is married to the chair of the management committee of the applicant organisation.

Mary de Vere, a representative of Preston Road Community Centre Association, spoke in support of this application.

The committee considered application CCGA\5 and discussed the following:

- Responsibility for the fire doors being DDA compliant.

RESOLVED (for 5; against 4; abstentions 2)

To award £5,000; £1,272 more than the officers' recommendation. Members were made aware that awarding more than the recommendation is contrary to policy, unless there are exceptional circumstances.

Abingdon Town Band – Ref CCGA\11

Two replacement instruments.

Grant sought: £5,000

The officer recommendation is to award £2213, 40% of the project cost, based on the grant scoring system.

The committee considered application CCGA\11 and discussed the following:

- The scoring criteria.

RESOLVED (for 10; against 0; abstentions 1)

To award £2766; which is £553 more than the officers' recommendation.

Trinity Learning – Ref CCGA\3

Equipment for 'Hello Abingdon' youth newsletter

Grant sought: £400

The officer recommendation is to award £320, which is 37.3% of the project cost, based on the grant scoring system.

The committee considered application CCGA\3 and discussed the following:

- The type of technology being used.

RESOLVED (for 10; against 0; abstentions 1)

To award £400; which is £80 more than the officers' recommendation.

Abingdon Lawn Tennis Club – Ref CCGA\6

To build a seventh tennis court.

Grant sought: £5,000

The officer recommendation is not to award any grant, based on the scoring system.

The committee considered application CCGA\6 and discussed the following:

- Important club in South Abingdon;
- The club withdrew during the last round at the meeting before the committee made a decision;
- Feasibility of increasing the CCG amount and reducing the NHB amount.

RESOLVED (for 9; against 1; abstentions 1)

To award £9,000; officers made the committee aware that this decision was contrary to policy.

Ab.40 2014/15 New Homes Bonus (NHB) Grants

The committee considered the head of corporate strategy's report. This set out details of five applications that the council had received for the Capital Community Grants, requesting a total of £17,700. The report also set out the financial position; there being £17,700 remaining in the current year's budget.

A correction to the report for the current NHB policy (Appendix 3) was highlighted; advising that the Committee with 26% of the budget split should read North East, not Abingdon.

The committee considered each application and awarded grants as follows:

Abingdon Lawn Tennis Club – Ref NHBA\5

To build a seventh tennis court.
Grant sought: £9,000

The committee considered application NHBA\5 in conjunction with their CCG application, as minuted in Ab.40.

RESOLVED (for 10; against 1; abstentions 0)

To award £5,000.

Abingdon-on-Thames Town Council – Ref NHBA\8

Fun in the park and music in the park (one day event)
Grant sought: £2,000

Councillors Helen Pighills, Jeanette Halliday, Jim Halliday, Sandy Lovatt, Julie Mayhew-Archer, Pat Lonergan and Angela Lawrence took no part in the discussion or voting as they are all Abingdon Town Councillors.

Councillor Richard Webber was voted in as Chair for this item.

Heather Brown, a representative of Abingdon Town Council, spoke in support of this application.

The committee considered application NHBA\8.

RESOLVED (for 4; against 0; abstentions 0)

To award £2,000.

Music for Autism – Ref NHBA\1

Two Music for Autism workshops at Kingfisher School in Abingdon.
Grant sought: £1,200

Simon Payne, a representative of Music for Autism, spoke in support of this application.

The committee considered application NHBA\1.

RESOLVED (for 11; against 0; abstentions 0)

To award £1,200.

Abingdon Town Band – Ref NHBA\7

Purchase six new band blazers.
Grant sought: £1,500

The committee considered application NHBA\7.

RESOLVED (for 11; against 0; abstentions 0)

To award £1,500.

SOFEA – Ref NHBA\10

'Get to Work' training programme.
Grant sought: £4,000

Richard Kennell, a representative of SOFEA, spoke in support of this application.

The committee considered application NHBA10 and discussed the following:

- How the scheme operates with its charity partners; and
- The areas covered in the district;

RESOLVED (for 11; against 0; abstentions 0)

To award £4,000.

Ab.41 Current NHB Policy review

Members were asked to review the current NHB policy.

The committee did not make any formal recommendations; however officers noted individual comments from members on the NHB and other grant schemes policies, which they will make the Cabinet member for grants aware of.

Ab.42 Abbey Gardens and Meadows

Trudy Godfrey, Economic Development Team Leader, presented her report on the Abbey Gardens and Meadow project.

Peter Harbour, a representative of Friends of Abbey Meadow Outdoor Pool, spoke about the project. His discussion included the following:

- A "flawed" consultation process;
- The three options are outweighed 2 to 1 for removing the pool;
- Criticism for the proposed £4.80 fee for using the pool;
- If working with GLL Better partnership, costs will go down and will increase the number of pool users; and
- Capital investment will be required to maintain the pool and for advertising.

The committee expressed the following comments about the project – the officer's responses are in italics:

1. Consultation process

- Concern that the process was rushed – it needs to be more detailed and take longer;
- The three proposed scenarios are divisive and confusing – *Hidden Britain worked with Officers to develop the three scenarios based on the consultation process working with 30 community groups and having in depth one-to-one consultation with key site users and people who don't use the site. This information was used to narrow down the three options ;*
- Can different ideas be used from the different scenarios? A more 'mix and match' approach or using transferable voting for different options;
- How can you stop people from voting more than once? – *The Consultation Officer will advise on how to manage multiple voting.*

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- Consultation is best carried out in summer , when most people would be using the current facilities, especially those considered 'hard to reach' and at different times of day;
 - Use market stalls to consult; and
 - Concern that District Councillors were not consulted.
2. Project name
 - Confusion as to the name of the project in referring to Abbey grounds, gardens and meadow
 3. Facilities
 - Concerns for fencing in the splash park;
 - Poor golf and tennis facilities;
 - Improving toilet facilities should be a top priority;
 - Facilities should not be assessed for their commercial viability as they are community assets;
 - Lack of signage and information about existing facilities; and
 - Key-holders of the tennis courts have not been included in the data for usage; and
 4. Overall project concerns
 - Need to specify time and budget;
 - Need a 'Big Idea' and a much bigger budget – Can invite West Waddy ADP architects to offer proposals for this 'Big Idea'; and
 - There is a lack of maintenance budget.
 5. What happens next?
 - Working with Ridge & Co Quantity Surveyors Consultancy and West Waddy ADP architects;
 - Costs are being sought;
 - Approval from Cabinet for consultation process;
 - Consultation with statutory bodies; and
 - Schools consultation with 11-18 year olds.

RESOLVED: (for 11; against 0; abstentions; 0)

To recommend to Cabinet that the Pitch & Putt, Crazy Golf and Tennis Courts are removed.

A motion was proposed and seconded for consultees to decide between three distinct scenarios and was lost on being put to the vote.

The meeting closed at 9.20 pm