

Ab.8

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE ABINGDON AREA COMMITTEE

HELD AT THE GUILDHALL,
ABINGDON ON THURSDAY, 25TH
OCTOBER, 2007 AT 7.00PM

Open to the Public, including the Press

PRESENT:

MEMBERS: Councillor Richard Webber (Chair), Alison Rooke (Vice-Chair), Paul Burton, Richard Gibson, Jim Halliday, Angela Lawrence, Pat Lonergan, Mary de Vere, Tony de Vere, Julie Mayhew-Archer, Tim Smith and Laurel Symons

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

NUMBER OF MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC: 10

Ab.12 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Samantha Bowring, Gervase Duffield and Janet Morgan.

Ab.13 MINUTES

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Abingdon Area Committee held on the 25 July 2007 were adopted and signed as a correct record.

In respect of Minute Ab.10 – Community Grants, recommendation 5(b), it was noted that the monitoring information required from Abingdon Town Council and the Drayton Twinning Society had yet to be received.

Ab.14 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Declarations of interest were made in respect of report 90/07 – Community Grants (Minute Ab.18 refers) as follows: -

<u>Councillor</u>	<u>Type of Interest</u>	<u>Item</u>	<u>Reason</u>
Alison Rooke	Personal and prejudicial	Compass Café	In so far as she had made a donation to this fund when she had been Mayor of Abingdon.
Mary de Vere Tony de Vere Alison Rooke Laurel Symons	Personal	Compass Café	Is so far as they belonged to the Methodist Church which was one of the supporting churches of the Peachcroft Centre where the Compass Café was located.

Pat Lonergan	Personal	Compass Café	In so far as he was Chair of the Town Council's Grants Committee which had considered an application from Compass Café.
Julie Mayhew Archer Angela Lawrence	Personal	Compass Café	In so far as they were Members of Abingdon Town Council's Finance Committee which approved recommendations from the Grants Committee and they had considered a recommendation in respect of a grant to the Compass Café.
Pat Lonergan	Personal	Abingdon Concert Band	In so far as he was the Chair of Abingdon Town Council's Grants Committee which had consider an application from the Abingdon Concert Band
Julie Mayhew Archer Angela Lawrence	Personal	Abingdon Concert Band	In so far as they were Members of Abingdon Town Council's Finance Committee which approved recommendations from the Grants Committee which had consider a recommendation in respect of the Abingdon Concert Band.
Alison Rooke	Personal	Abingdon Performance Arts Group Enterprise (APAGE)	In so far as the application related the Operatic Society of which she was a Member.
Jim Halliday Tony De Vere Mary De Vere	Personal	APAGE	In so far as they were acquainted with Malcolm Ross the applicant.
Julie Mayhew Archer	Personal	APAGE	In so far as she knew of many of the people within the societies but not as friends.
Julie Mayhew Archer	Personal	Abingdon Festival of Music	In so far as she had attended a concerto competition in her capacity as Chair of the District

			Council.
Angela Lawrence	Personal	North East Abingdon Community Association (NEACA)	In so far as she had been acquainted with Dr Roger Davidson many years ago in that he had been a former pupil.
Alison Rooke	Personal and Prejudicial	NEACA	In so far as she was the Council's representative on NEACA. Furthermore, she advised that he daughter was moving into a property near the site.
Tony De Vere	Personal and Prejudicial	NEACA	In so far as he was the President of NEACA.
Mary De Vere	Personal	NEACA	In so far as her husband was President of NACA and she was acquainted with Dr Roger Davidson.
Pat Lonergan	Personal and Prejudicial	NEACA	In so far as he was Abingdon Town Council's representative on NEACA.

Ab.15 URGENT BUSINESS AND CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chair made the following announcements:-

Abingdon Area Forum will take place on Wednesday 14th November 2007

Ab.16 STATEMENTS AND PETITIONS FROM THE PUBLIC UNDER STANDING ORDER

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The Chair reported that notice had been received from six members of the public that they each wished to make a statement at the meeting. Statements were made as follows: -

- (1) Rosemary Joseph – Abingdon Festival Music Association

Rosemary Joseph made a statement in support of the application for a grant to the Abingdon Festival Music Association. She informed the Committee that the Festival had been launched 10 years ago and was an annual opportunity for young people to make music. There was a warm and friendly atmosphere

which attracted people from various backgrounds. She pointed out that there were few opportunities for young people to play as soloists with orchestras and this scheme provided an opportunity to allow up to three performers to play. She explained that the winner would be able to perform in a full concert, which she stated was a wonderful opportunity. The first Concerto class had been in 2005 and had been held again in 2006. She stated that she hoped it would be held again in 2008. She commented that next year, local funding would be required. However the Association was looking for permanent funding given that adjudicators from outside the area were costly.

The Chair thanked Rosemary Joseph for her statement.

(2) Roger Wilkinson – Abingdon Concert Band

Mr Roger Wilkinson made a statement in support of the application from the Abingdon Concert Band. He advised the Committee that the Band had played at various local performances in the area and was well supported by local people. He advised that the Band met weekly and would give performances in the local area, such as at fetes, shows, charity events and concerts. He explained that the attendance at these events was indicative of the enjoyment and appreciation that the Band brought to the local community. Mr Wilkinson spoke of the recent joint Proms type event with Abingdon's Town Band in the Guildhall earlier in October commenting that it had been extremely popular, with a near capacity audience enjoying the well known pieces performed.

Mr Wilkinson explained the composition of the Band advising that players of all ages gave up their time to meet on a weekly basis to rehearse a wide variety of music for the concert venues. He reported that the Band was a registered charity and was therefore self funding, relying heavily on donations from charity events and other fund raising activities. He explained that the Band actively sought new players.

Mr Wilkinson reported that the current grant application was to assist in the funding of a set of new banners for the Band. He explained that the existing banners were over 25 years old and inevitably suffering from wear and tear and in need of replacement. It was planned that the Band's logo would be incorporated onto the new set of banners, thereby presenting a professional contemporary image. He explained that whilst giving the Band a more vibrant image, the banners would also help promote Abingdon as a centre synonymous with cultural events and assist in recruiting new members from the local community.

Mr Wilkinson reported that grant applications had been submitted to other organisations and he was awaiting feedback on these.

The Chair thanked Roger Wilkinson for his statement.

(3) Mr Ross – Abingdon Performance Arts Group Enterprise

Mr Ross made a statement in support of the application from the Abingdon Performing Arts Group Enterprise (APAGE). He explained that the Group required a grant of £4,000 in order to produce a brochure. It was reported that the Group wished to promote the experience of new art forms. He explained that the brochure would go out to households throughout the Vale. He reported that the Group would hold a festival which over a fortnight period which would include various events. He highlighted that APAGE had not asked for an increase on the grant that it had previously received and that the Group still had funds available from last year due to skillful housekeeping.

The Chair thanked Mr Ross for his statement.

(4) Mr Booker – Dorchester Sailing Club

Mr Booker made a statement in support of the application from the Dorchester Sailing Club. He advised that the Club drew a substantial number of members from the Vale of White Horse. He explained that the Club was seeking the financial support of the Committee in order to enable the building of its clubhouse. He explained that the new clubhouse would allow the Club to provide sailing and other water sports for the disabled; provide more outreach programmes to primary and secondary schools to develop curriculum and after school water sports clubs; encourage more women into the sports and target deprived and under privileged locations and people within the community. He advised the Committee that water sports offered an enjoyable route to personal fitness and fun.

The Chair thanked Mr Booker for his statement.

(5) Steven Godfrey – Compass Café

Mr Godfrey made a statement in support of the application by the Compass Café. He advised that at a recent neighbourhood watch forum chaired by the Police, it had been apparent that local residents overwhelming concern was anti-social behaviour of teenagers. He commented that the Peachcroft Christian Centre had a well motivated team of volunteers keeping the Compass Café running for younger teenagers. He advised that the Café wished to use the grant to employ a part time youth worker to engage with the teenagers in Peachcroft, which he believed would have a significant effect on what was seen locally as an ongoing social problem.

The Chair thanked Mr Godfrey for his statement.

(6) Dr Roger Davidson – North East Abingdon Community Association (NEACA)

Dr Davidson made a statement regarding the application of NEACA. He explained that the Association wished to refurbish its existing facilities and to provide additional space through the construction of a log cabin at a cost of £115,000 for each project. He explained that a grant had been secured subject to a grant being received from the Council.

The Chair thanked Dr Davidson for his statement.

Ab.17 QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC UNDER STANDING ORDER 32

None

Ab.18 COMMUNITY GRANTS

The Committee received and considered report 90/07 of the Strategic Director and Monitoring Officer which set out the budget position for this Committee in respect of Community Grants and invited Members to consider and determine the grant applications received.

A number of statements were made by members of the public earlier in the meeting which the Committee had regard to when considering the applications.

Each of the applications were considered in detail and the follow comments made:-

(1) Grant Application - Dorchester Sailing Club

One Member highlighted that approximately 35% of the membership of the Club lived in the Vale.

(2) Grant Application - Compass Café

(Councillor Alison Rooke had declared a personal and prejudicial interest in this item and in accordance with Standing Order 34 she left the meeting during its consideration)

(Councillors Mary de Vere, Tony de Vere, Angela Lawrence, Pat Lonergan, Julie Mayhew Archer and Laurel Symons had each declared a personal interest in this item and in accordance with Standing Order 34 they remained in the meeting during its consideration)

One Member commended the project in that he believed that it would be beneficial for young people.

Another Member suggested that the grant offer should be subject to the grant being used specifically for the employment of a part time youth worker and not for general administration. This was supported by other Members of the Committee.

(3) Grant Application – Abingdon Concert Band

(Councillors Angela Lawrence, Pat Lonergan and Julie Mayhew Archer had each declared a personal interest in this item and in accordance with Standing Order 34 they remained in the meeting during its consideration)

In response to a question raised, it was noted that the banners would be used to hang over the music stands and were important in terms of the Band's appearance.

(4) Grant Application - Abingdon Performance Arts Group Enterprise (APAGE)

(Councillors Mary de Vere, Tony de Vere, Jim Halliday, Julie Mayhew Archer and Alison Rooke had each declared a personal interest in this item and in accordance with Standing Order 34 they remained in the meeting during its consideration)

One Member reminded the Committee that Members had previously been concerned regarding APAGE achieving value for money in terms of the brochure as a method of advertising. It was reported that tenders were about to be received.

One Member questioned whether the brochures were the most effective way of advertising, although other Members considered that the brochure was a good advertising tool. Another Member expressed concern that the Committee gave a grant each year to the same organisation for the same project. It was commented that APAGE was a well organised "umbrella" organisation giving publicity for many events. It was suggested that a survey of audiences to determine how they had become aware of an individual event might be beneficial.

The Committee supported the offer of a grant, although one Member suggested that this should be subject to APAGE accepting the lowest tender for the production of the brochures. However, this condition was not supported as it was commented that the lowest tender might not be the most appropriate.

(5) Grant Application - Abingdon Festival Music Association

(Councillor Julie Mayhew Archer had declared a personal interest in this item and in accordance with Standing Order 34 she remained in the meeting during its consideration)

The Committee noted the applicant's financial balance as at the end of April and one Member sought advice on other expenditure. The Officers responded that the Festival had running costs in the sum of £4,290. Reference was made to the Officers' recommendation that a grant in the sum of £400 be offered it being noted that this was in line with the amount awarded in 2006. However it was noted that costs had increased since that time.

One Member supported the application noting that the Festival was a commendable event. Whilst not promoting this any more than any other event, she suggested that Members would benefit from attending it.

(6) Grant Application – North East Abingdon Community Association (NEACA)

(Councillor Tony de Vere, Pat Lonergan and Alison Rooke had each declared a personal and prejudicial interest in this item and in accordance with Standing Order 34 they left the meeting during its consideration)

(Councillors Mary de Vere and Angela Lawrence had both declared a personal interest in this item and in accordance with Standing Order 34 they remained in the meeting during its consideration)

In response to a question raised the Officers reported that the original scheme had been more than £230,000 and that if the Committee did not agree to the previous allocation in the light of the changed circumstances it could return the money to its budget.

One Member commented that NEACA had been unsuccessful in securing other grant money. He considered that NEACA would expect to be offered the grant that they had previously awarded for this scheme. He commented that he thought it would be reasonable to agree the amount previously awarded. However, another Member noted that in effect the Committee was being asked to increase its percentage towards the scheme.

The Officers explained that the NEACA had previously asked for £100,000, half of which had been awarded. One Member commented that the Group had asked for 10% last year and the Committee had given 5%.

RESOLVED

- (a) *that the budget position for the Abingdon Area Committee at the beginning of the financial year be noted;*
- (b) *that the grant applications received be determined as follows: -*

<u>Applicant</u>	<u>Reason for Grant</u>	<u>Agenda and Council Priority</u>	<u>Grant Awarded</u>
<i>Dorchester Sailing Club</i>	<i>Construction of on-shore facilities</i>	<i>Social Agenda, Access to Services Priority</i>	<i>£1,000 (Proposed by Councillor Pat Lonergan, seconded by Councillor Jim Halliday seconded and agreed by 11 votes to 1 with 1 abstention)</i>
<i>Compass Café</i>	<i>The employment of a part-time</i>	<i>Social Agenda and Town and Village Vitality Priority</i>	<i>£5,000 to be used specifically for the employment of a</i>

	<i>youth worker.</i>		<i>part time youth worker and not for general administration (Proposed by Councillor Angela Lawrence, seconded by Councillor Mary de Vere and agreed by 11 votes to nil with 1).</i>
<i>Abingdon Concert Band</i>	<i>Towards the cost of new banners</i>	<i>Social Agenda and Town and Village Vitality Priority</i>	<i>£700 (Proposed by Councillor Alison Rooke, seconded by Councillor Mary de Vere and agreed by 12 votes to nil).</i>
<i>Abingdon Performance Arts Group Enterprise (APAGE)</i>	<i>Towards the cost of producing and distributing the 2008 Festival Brochure</i>	<i>Social Agenda and Town and Village Vitality Priority</i>	<i>Up to £4,000 (Proposed by Councillor Alison Rooke, seconded by Councillor Mary de Vere and agreed by 12 votes to nil).</i>
<i>Abingdon Music Festival</i>	<i>Towards the cost of holding a concerto class</i>	<i>Social Agenda and Town and Village Vitality Priority</i>	<i>£500 (Proposed by Councillor Pat Lonergan, seconded by Councillor Julie Mayhew Archer and agreed by 12 votes to nil).</i>

- (c) *that the update from the North East Abingdon Community Association be noted and that it be agreed that the grant amount previously awarded by the Abingdon Area Committee in the sum of £50,000 is still available for the amended project as outlined in Appendix B to report 90/07. (Proposed by Councillor Julie Mayhew Archer, seconded by Councillor Angela Lawrence and agreed by 8 votes to nil with 1 abstention).*

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

None.

The meeting rose at 8.30 pm