

Minutes

of a meeting of the

Abingdon Area Committee

held at 7pm on Thursday 5 November 2009
at the Guildhall, Abingdon



Open to the Public, including the Press

Present:

Members: Councillor Julie Mayhew-Archer (Chair), Julia Bricknell, Paul Burton, Mary de Vere, Tony de Vere, Jim Halliday, Angela Lawrence, Pat Lonergan, Janet Morgan, Alison Rooke, Laurel Symons and Richard Webber

Officers: Steve Culliford, Lorna Edwards, Jason Popham and Toby Warren

Number of members of the public: Three

Ab.10 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Gervase Duffield.

Ab.11 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of the committee held on 2 July 2009 were adopted and signed as a correct record.

Ab.12 Declarations of interest

Declarations of interest were made in respect of community grant applications as follows:

Councillor	Type of interest	Application	Reason	Minute Ref
Julie Mayhew-Archer Jim Halliday Angela Lawrence Pat Lonergan Alison Rooke	Personal and Prejudicial	Abingdon Town Council (twinning)	In so far as they were town councillors	Ab.15
Richard Webber	Personal and Prejudicial	Drayton Twinning Society	In so far as he was a member of the Drayton Twinning society	Ab.15

Councillor	Type of interest	Application	Reason	Minute Ref
Jim Halliday	Personal	Sea Cadets	In so far he knew the organiser of the Sea Cadets	Ab.15
Alison Rooke	Personal	Abingdon Performing Arts Group Enterprise (APAGE)	In so far as she knew the organiser through her involvement with the operatic society	Ab.15
Tony de Vere Jim Halliday Richard Webber Julie Mayhew Archer Laurel Symons	Personal	APAGE	In so far as they knew the organiser	Ab.15
Jim Halliday	Personal	Abingdon Rugby Club	In so far as he knew the organiser	Ab.15

Ab.13 Urgent business and chair's announcements

None

Ab.14 Statements, petitions and questions from the public affecting the Abingdon Area Committee

The committee received three statements from the public relating to grant applications as follows:

- (1) Mr Malcolm Ross spoke on behalf of Abingdon Performing Arts Group Enterprise, known as APAGE, thanking the committee for the opportunity to speak. He welcomed the proposed service level agreement and the new relationship it would bring with the District Council. He stated that this was more important than the grant itself. He reported that he was well aware of the conditions included in the agreement and understood that it was not a contract. An Service Level agreement would mean that not only had APAGE secured psychological support but also a steady influx of funds.
- (2) Mr Steve Beacon spoke on behalf of the Abingdon Rugby Club. He highlighted the positive impact that the club had on Abingdon. He reported that the Club had been founded in 1931 and had in excess of 400 members, but it was hoped that this would increase to over 500 by 2013. At the same time the Club aimed to increase the number of volunteers. He stated that funding for the new rugby pitch had been secured and the Club was requesting a grant towards the pitch lighting.
- (3) Sue Hargreeves spoke in support of Abingdon Sea Cadets. She explained that the Sea Cadets were applying for a grant to replace their boat trailer, which was damaged

in the recent floods in 2007. A new trailer would mean the Sea Cadets could reintroduce teaching of power boating skills during the summer months. Amongst the Abingdon membership, there were currently cadets with special educational needs.

The Chair thanked the speakers for their statements explaining that they would be taken into account when the committee considered the respective applications later in the meeting.

Ab.15 Community Grants

The committee received and considered report 68/09 of the Head of Community Strategy, which set out details of three applications for community grants and two requests for twinning grants. The report also set out the committee's community grants budget position. It was noted that £10,830 remained in the current financial year. However, the committee noted that its available budget could be increased in that the grants awarded by the Committee on 6 November 2008 to the Compass Café and the Vale of White Horse Foyer had not been claimed. However, both applicants might not need to claim these grants if their applications for third party funding to the County Council's Chill Out Fund were unsuccessful.

Councillors noted that there was insufficient funding available to award all the grants requested. Councillors concluded that each application should be considered on its own merits and decided to have no regard to the possible additional funding from the Chill Out Fund. In the first instance, the committee considered whether to support the application in principle. The Committee would then revisit each application and vote on amounts to be awarded.

(1) Abingdon Town Council Twining

Councillor Tony de Vere took the Chair for this item

(Councillors Julie Mayhew-Archer, Jim Halliday, Angela Lawrence, Pat Lonergan and Alison Rooke had each declared a personal and prejudicial interest in this item and left the room during its consideration).

Councillors considered the budget provision for this financial year and considered reducing the amount awarded to Abingdon Town Council for twinning purposes. It was reported that a large part of the grant would be used to fund the staff post.

(2) Drayton Twinning Society

(Councillor Richard Webber declared a personal and prejudicial interest in this item and left the room in during its consideration).

Whilst considering each application on its own merits, Councillors commented that it would be fair if the grant to Drayton Twinning Society was reduced by the same percentage as that to Abingdon Town Council. It was reported that the Society was independent of the Parish Council and was run entirely by volunteers. It was commented that the Society ran on a two year cycle, one year was spent visiting the other twin town and the other spent hosting. This resulted in significant variations in the budget each year. The Committee was reluctant to decrease the grant mid-term as the twinning society was expecting the same level of funding and had budgeted for this. The Committee considered that the full amount requested should be awarded on this occasion but the Society should be informed that the amount could be reduced next year.

(3) APAGE (Abingdon Performing Arts Group Enterprise)

(Councillors Tony de Vere, Jim Halliday, Julie Mayhew-Archer, Alison Rooke, Laurel Symons and Richard Webber each declared a personal interest in this item).

At the last meeting of the Abingdon Area Committee members resolved to support, in principle, a three year Service Level Agreement (SLA) with APAGE to support the Abingdon Arts Festival. This would give APAGE regular funding and avoid the need for the organisation to submit a fresh grant application each year. Councillors commented that an agreement was not a contract, the agreement could be terminated by giving APAGE six months' notice and the amount could be reduced from one year to the next depending on the Councils budget. Councillors thought this was the best arrangement for both APAGE and the Council. The Committee agreed to award £2,750 to APAGE as part of the agreement. However if additional funds became available through grants, the authority was delegated to increase this amount to £3,000.

(4) Abingdon Sea Cadets

(Councillor Jim Halliday had declared a personal interest in this item).

Councillors asked if the Sea Cadets received any funding from the Ministry of Defence or the Navy as it had been reported that similar organisations had received funding in the past. It was reported that the Sea Cadets did not receive any further funding and were entirely self sufficient. Councillors commented that £1,000 was a significant sum for the Sea Cadets who had raised substantial funds themselves. Councillors noted that the Sea Cadets supported a lot of children and people with disabilities. As the Sea Cadets accommodated pupils from South Oxfordshire then it was suggested that the organisation should apply to that district council for grant funding also. The Committee decided to award the grant requested.

(5) Abingdon Rugby Club

(Councillor Jim Halliday had declared a personal interest in this item).

Members spoke highly of the Rugby Club and remarked on the high number of users. As the work at the club was nearly complete it was suggested that it would be beneficial for the Rugby Club to submit an invoice for the work, thus lowering the VAT payable before the VAT was raised again in January 2010.

RESOLVED

- (a) *that the remaining community grants budget for the committee in 2009/10 be noted;*
- (b) *that the following service level agreement grants be approved:*

<u>Applicant</u>	<u>Scheme</u>	<u>Grant awarded</u>	<u>Voting</u>
Abingdon Town Council	Twinning grant	£2,000	Proposed by Councillor Laurel Symons and seconded by Councillor Mary de Vere.

<u>Applicant</u>	<u>Scheme</u>	<u>Grant awarded</u>	<u>Voting</u>
			Agreed by 7 votes to nil.
Drayton Twinning Society	Twinning grant	£500 The society to be informed that this amount could reduce next year.	Proposed by Councillor Jim Halliday and seconded by Councillor Mary de Vere. Agreed by 10 votes to nil with 1 abstention.

- (c) that the Council enters into a service level agreement with the Abingdon Performing Art Group Enterprise, known as APAGE, using the agreement set out in the appendix to report 68/09;
- (d) that £2,750 be awarded in the current financial year to APAGE as part of the service level agreement with the council (proposed by Councillor Janet Morgan and seconded by Councillor Tony de Vere and agreed by 12 votes to nil);
- (e) that authority be delegated to the Community Strategy Manager, in consultation with the Chair of the Abingdon Area Committee, to increase the amount of grant funding to APAGE through the service level agreement from £2,750 up to £3,000 if funds become available in the current financial year; (proposed by Councillor Janet Morgan and seconded by Councillor Tony de Vere and agreed by 12 votes to nil)
- (f) that the following community grants be awarded:

<u>Applicant</u>	<u>Scheme</u>	<u>Grant awarded</u>	<u>Voting</u>
Abingdon Sea Cadets	Funding for a new boat trailer	£1,139	Proposed by Councillor Pat Lonergan and seconded by Councillor Tony de Vere and agreed by 12 votes to nil.
Abingdon Rugby Club	Installing floodlighting	£4,441 (See also resolution (g) below)	Proposed by Councillor Pat Lonergan and seconded by Councillor Alison Rooke and agreed by 12 votes to nil

- (g) that authority be delegated to the Community Strategy Manager, in consultation with the Chair of Abingdon Area Committee, to increase the amount of grant awarded to Abingdon Rugby Club from £4,441 to £5,000 if funds become available in the current financial year; and

- (h) *that a decision on the need to re-establish the Abingdon Area Forum be deferred until the impact of the Choose Abingdon Partnership launch event has been fully evaluated.*

Exempt information under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972

None

The meeting rose at 8.45 pm