

Minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee held at 7pm on 15 February 2011 in the Old Abbey House, Abingdon.

Present

Cllr Lesley Legge	Chair of Committee/ Leader
Cllr Jim Halliday	Vice Chair of Committee
Cllr Alastair Fear	Chair of Amenities & Recreation
Cllr Julie Mayhew-Archer	Chair of Museum Mgt Ctte
Cllr Patrick Lonergan	
Cllr Angela Lawrence	
Cllr Alison Rooke	

In Attendance

Mr Nigel Warner	Town Clerk
Mrs Sandra Hill	Deputy Town Clerk
Mr Steve Rich	Projects & Technical Manager

SECTION I (Open to the Public Including the Press)

Part A

126 **Apologies**

Apologies were received from the Mayor of Abingdon, Cllr Duncan Brown and Cllrs Alison Rooke and Tim Oates.

127 **Declarations of interest**

Cllrs Jim Halliday, Angela Lawrence, Patrick Lonergan, and Julie Mayhew-Archer declared personal interests in any matters relating to the Vale of White Horse District Council as they are Members of that Authority.

Cllr Alastair Fear declared a personal and prejudicial interest in the Residents' Parking Wardens Scheme, contained within confidential papers, as a resident who subscribes to the Residents' Parking Scheme. Cllr Jim Halliday declared a personal interest in the Residents' Parking Wardens Scheme, contained within confidential papers, as a relative subscribed to the Residents' Parking Scheme.

All Members present at the meeting declared a personal interest in the item at minute 138 (Members' Allowances) as they are Members of Abingdon Town Council. A dispensation under the code of conduct exists for this item in order to allow the Council to deal with this matter.

128 **Minutes**

Resolved to sign as a correct record the minutes of the meetings of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 11 January 2011.

129 **Matters Arising**

121 – Archives Report. The Deputy Town Clerk reported that she had passed on the Committee's request to the Hon Archivist, and to date there has been no response.

Resolved that if the Hon Archivist has any future requirements then she should approach the Deputy Town Clerk.

130 **Statements and Questions from the Public**

There were no statements and questions from the public.

Part B: Matters referred and minutes of sub-committees, working parties and other bodies

131 **Matters referred**

There were not matters referred.

132 **Best Value Sub-Committee**

The Town Clerk reported that the Best Value Sub-Committee minutes have not been completed and would therefore be presented to the next meeting of the Finance & General Purposes Committee on 15 March, when the final report would also be presented.

133 **Fisheries Sub-Committee**

As the Fisheries Sub-Committee meeting was not quorate, it was agreed that the resolutions contained within the Fisheries Sub-Committee Minutes would be presented to the Finance & General Purposes Committee as **recommendations**.

Apologies were received from Cllr Julia Bricknell, but were not recorded in the Minutes.

It was **resolved** to agree all the recommendations contained within the Minutes of the Fisheries Sub-Committee dated 8 February 2011.

134 **Christmas Extravaganza Joint Committee**

Resolved to receive the minutes of the meeting of the Christmas Extravaganza Joint Committee which took place on 2 February 2011, and any recommendations contained therein.

135 **Town Crier Editorial Working Party**

Members expressed concern over the non-delivery of around 2,500 copies of the Winter Town Crier. It was **resolved** that a letter be sent to Door to Door outlining the Council's protest re the non-delivery and surplus Town Criers being recycled without the Town Council having the option of reclaiming them.

Resolved to receive the minutes of the meeting of the Town Crier Editorial Working Party which took place on 25 January 2011, and any recommendations contained therein.

136 **Abingdon Joint Environmental Trust**

The Council is represented on the above body and minutes of the last meetings are enclosed so Members are kept up to date with developments.

The meeting acknowledged that the functions and monies held by the Trust would be transferring to the Town Council and that the Constitution should therefore be revised to reflect the change. It was **resolved** that a small working party consisting of Cllrs Jim

Halliday, Julie Mayhew-Archer and Patrick Lonergan would modify the constitution in readiness for the next Finance & General Purposes Committee on 15 March 2011.

Resolved to note the minutes of the meeting of 14 January 2011.

137 **Choose Abingdon Partnership Board**

Resolved to note the minutes of the meeting of the 29 November 2010.

Resolved that the Council would build into its medium-term plans provision for continued funding, at a similar level to the present agreement, of the Partnership for three years beyond the expiry of the current agreement (31 March 2012).

Resolved to note the letter from the Chair of the Choose Abingdon Partnership.

Part C: Financial

138 **Payments schedule, financial and performance monitoring and general Report of the Town Clerk/ Responsible Financial Officer**

All Members present at the meeting declared a personal interest in the item in relation to Members' Allowances as they are Members of Abingdon Town Council. It was noted that a dispensation under the code of conduct exists for this item in order to allow the Council to deal with this matter.

Resolved: that the schedule of payments for the period October to December 2010 be approved.

Resolved: that progress in meeting the Council's key objectives for 2010/11 be noted.

Members' Allowances

Resolved

- a that in accordance with the Local Authorities (Members Allowances)(England) Regulations 2003 (as amended) the allowance for Town Council members for the year commencing 1 April 2011 be set at £765.80 per annum.
- b that that the approved duties for payment to Members for travel and subsistence be defined as attendance:
 - at the conference of the National Association of Local Councils
 - at the Argentan Quasimodo Fair
 - at the annual Twin Town conference
 - at the County Council Museums Joint Working Party
 - at other such meetings outside of the Parish as are approved by the Town Clerk in consultation with the Chair of the Finance and General Purposes Committee.
- that the relevant rate is mileage rate as agreed by the NJC if travelling by car or the cost of standard class public transport. Subsistence allowance is at the rates agreed by the NJC.
- c that the Mayor's Allowance for 2011/12 is £3,160, which is a contribution towards the significant expenses of undertaking the role of Mayor of Abingdon. The Town

Council does not have the power to pay an allowance to the Deputy Mayor, but by local arrangement the Mayor allocates a sum of £200 per year from their allowance as a contribution towards the expenses of the Deputy Mayor.

Civic Matters

Resolved that the traditional “end of term dinner” to mark the end of the term of the would take place at 8pm for 8.30pm Thursday 7 April, and that costs for the meal would be covered by those attending.

Seniority of Members

Resolved that the Chair and Vice Chair of Finance & General Purposes Committee, and the Town Clerk would look at the way in which Council seniority is calculated, specifically in relation to Past Mayors and Members who return to the Council after a break.

Government Consultations -

Revision and consolidation of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2003 as amended.

Code for recommended practice for local authorities on data transparency

The Committee noted the comments of the Town Clerk in relation to the above and it was **Resolved** that authority be delegated to the Town Clerk , in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair of Finance & General Purpose Committee, to respond on behalf of the Council.

Resolved to receive and note the report of the Town Clerk/ Responsible Finance Officer, and to approve the schedule of accounts from 1 October 2010 to 31 December 2010

Part D: Town Council services

139 **Abingdon Visitor & Community Information Centre Review Consultation**

Resolved that the Abingdon Visitor & Community Information Centre Saturday opening hours would not change and therefore remain as current i.e. June-September 10am-4pm (with half an hour for lunch) and October-May 10am – 3pm (no lunch).

Resolved to receive and note the report of the Deputy Town Clerk.

140 **Abingdon War Memorial**

The Projects and Technical Manager spoke to his previously distributed report highlighting that work on the war memorial was due to start on 21 February 2011 with the street furniture being delivered on 16 February 2011.

A Member informed the meeting that the £20,000 funding being sought from Oxfordshire County Council for footway and kerbing work technically belonged to Abingdon anyway as it was government funded money intended for the Abingdon Integrated Transport Strategy (AbITS).

The Project and Technical manager stated that it is anticipated the work would be completed by the end of April 2011.

Resolved that once the work is completed a small ceremony should be conducted in the presence of the British Legion.

Resolved to receive and note the report of the Project and Technical Manager.

141 **New Depot**

The Projects and Technical Manager spoke to his previously distributed report stating that the main building has been erected and the external work done. The internal work is now in progress with a view of the new depot being completed in April. The new road/pathway work is in progress. The 'old' War Memorial baskets would be placed in the cemetery.

Thanks were relayed to Cllr Peter Fulk and other members of the Working Party (Cllr Alastair Fear, Cllr Jeanette Halliday, and Cllr Lesley Legge) for their work towards the implementation of the new depot and the enhanced facilities.

Resolved that an Open Day would be arranged inviting the public to view the new depot and facilities.

Resolved to receive and note the report of the Projects and Technical Manager.

142 **Royal Wedding Bun Throwing**

Resolved that delegation be given to the Chair of Finance & General Purposes, Chair of the County Hall Museum Management Committee and the Town Clerk, to manage the arrangements for both the Bun Throwing and the raffle.

Resolved to receive and note the report of the Project and Technical Manager.

The Chair reported that she and the Projects & Technical Manager attended a meeting with the Chief Executive and Leader of the Vale of White Horse District Council regarding the Royal Wedding in April 2011 and next year's Queen's Diamond Jubilee celebrations. She highlighted that insurance for street parties will be through the County Council and licensing for events would be dealt with by the District Council. A website has been set-up for street parties www.streetparty.org which would be advertised in the Spring 2011 Town Crier.

The Queen's Diamond Jubilee celebrations will take place from 2-5 June 2012. Events include a lit bonfires t around the country, Jubilee church services, Jubilee book signing and a performance by the County Schools' Music Service.

A national schools' competition to design a Jubilee Logo is also being organised.

Cllr Angela Lawrence left the meeting at 9.10pm

143 **PCSO Neighbourhood Report**

The Chair reported that a five-weekly cycle meeting has been organised with Thames Valley Police, with the first meeting taking place on Wednesday 5 March 2011. In line with the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), an annual report would be produced outlining the year's work of the Council's Town Centre PCSO.

Resolved to note the PCSO January Neighbourhood newsletter as previously circulated to all Councillors via email.

Part E: Consultations

144 **Local Government Boundary Commission – Electoral Review of Oxfordshire**

Resolved to consider the electoral review in readiness for the next meeting of the Finance & General Purposes Committee on 15 March 2011.

145 **Dates of Future Meetings**

Resolved to note that next meeting of this committee is due to take place on Tuesday 15 March.

146 **Publicity**

Resolved – that publicity be given to the transfer of the Guildhall on 1 April 2011.

SECTION II (Excluding the public and the press)

147 **Exclusion of the public, including the press**

Resolved that the Chair move:

That in accordance with section 1 (2) of the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960 (as extended by Section 100 of the Local Government Act 1972), the public (including the press) be excluded from the meeting because of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, as summarised below:

- Confidential Minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee held on 11 January 2011
- Matters arising and matters referred
- Old Abbey House ICT System and Support
- Christmas Lights
- Staffing Matters