

**Abingdon-on-Thames Town Council**

**Draft Minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee**

**Held on 4<sup>th</sup> June 2013**

**At 7 pm in the Committee Room at the Old Abbey House, Abingdon**

**Present:**

Cllr Sandy Lovatt	Chairman
Cllr Alison Rooke	Vice-Chairman
Cllr Marilyn Badcock	
Cllr Michael Badcock	
Cllr Samantha Bowring	Ex-officio, Mayor
Cllr Iain Littlejohn	
Cllr Patrick Lonergan	
Cllr Monica Lovatt	
Cllr Julie Mayhew-Archer	
Cllr Helen Pighills	

**In Attendance**

Ms Heather Brown	Manager, Choose Abingdon Partnership (minute F1 to F14)
Mr Robert Draper	Shared Licensing Team Leader, VWHDC (minute F1 to F7)
Mr Chris Bryan	Manager, The Abingdon Bridge (minute F1 to F6)
Mr Nigel Warner	Town Clerk (Clerk to the meeting)

**F1 Apologies for absence**

There were no apologies for absence as all Members of the Committee were present at the meeting.

**F2 Declarations of Interest**

Cllr Sandy Lovatt declared a non-pecuniary interest in the item at Minute F6 – Community Fund Applications, The Abingdon Bridge, as he is the Town Council's representative committee on that organisation's management committee. Cllr Alison Rooke declared a non-pecuniary interest in the same item as she is an acquaintance of the Chairman of the Abingdon Bridge.

**F3 Minutes**

**Resolved:** that the minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 12<sup>th</sup> March 2013 be agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

**F4 Matters Arising**

There were no matters arising from the previous meeting not covered elsewhere on the agenda.

**F5 Statements and Questions from the Public**

None.

F6 **Community Fund Applications**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Town Clerk in relation to the above.

It was noted that at the previous meeting the Committee had resolved that Abingdon Bridge be awarded a grant of £12,500 from the Community Fund towards the costs of the organisation's alcohol and substance abuse project, in accordance with their application dated 13<sup>th</sup> February 2013. It had been agreed that half of the grant should be released and that The Bridge then make an additional presentation to this Committee. This would include an update outlining the plans and strategy which The Bridge had in place in relation to sustainable funding for the project. Following this presentation, the Committee would then consider the release of the remaining half of the allocated grant.

In order to allow the representative of the Bridge to report back, the Chairman of the Committee, Cllr Sandy Lovatt, moved and the Committee resolved that Standing Orders be suspended in order to allow Mr Chris Bryan, Chairman of the Abingdon Bridge, to speak to the meeting.

*Mr Bryan circulated a paper to the meeting which is attached to these minutes. He also circulated copies of The Bridge's annual report which would be considered at their Annual General Meeting which was due to take place on 13<sup>th</sup> June 2013.*

*He thanked the Town Council for making the grant of £12,500 which would enable the project to continue pending longer term funding. He stated that The Bridge needed more sustainable funding in order to continue this project and was working hard to increase its different sources of income. To date it had already raised more than £19,000 towards the costs of the project and whilst this meant that the fundraising was well on its way, the organisation was not complacent. Funding options which were being explored included the submission of a major bid for lottery funding. After full consideration The Bridge had also appointed a professional fundraiser to assist in raising the additional income. This was on a 12 month probationary period and the decision to employ a fundraiser was based on the considerable success that a similar post had in the past in the terms of raising money. The establishment of this post would also allow The Bridge's manager to concentrate on service delivery. Other developments in the organisation included the appointment of a senior counsellor and the negotiation of service level agreements to put the organisation on a more business like footing with organisations such as Thames Valley Police, GP practices and schools.*

*There were also a number of other proposals for future development. The organisation recognised the need to change the way in which it operated as there was a feeling they were losing momentum. An example of this was building up links with the youth club in south Abingdon in order to be more pro-active. The organisation had been established 20 years ago and they were therefore taking advantage of an offer to assist in rebranding of The Bridge. This would link in very well with the move to new premises in the old police station. In relation to the latter, The Bridge was already building up links with a number of residents in the Old Gaol who were already helping with the work of the organisation. One of the aims of The Bridge in moving forward was to ensure all 14 and 15 year olds in the town knew of the work, the support and the services which were offered by The Bridge. The Chairman of the Committee thanked Mr Bryan for his presentation and invited Members to raise any questions.*

*In response to a question, Mr Bryan stated that the £19,000 raised towards the project included the £6,250 which had already been released from the Town Council. The total amount of money which needed to be raised was £25,000.*

*A question was raised regarding whether The Bridge required a fundraiser who was separate to the person who was already in place on the management committee as the "bid writer;" and also the cost of employing the fundraiser. In this regard, it was felt that the skills required by the person writing bids were different from the person whose primary purpose was to identify sources of funding. A fundraiser had been employed by The Bridge previously. Their services had cost £2,000 and as a result of their efforts, £24,000 of income had been generated.*

The Chairman of the Committee now reinstated Standing Orders and discussion of the award of the second half of the grant was deferred to the confidential part of the agenda.

*Mr Bryan left the meeting at this point, it being 7.22pm.*

#### F7 **Trading on the Market Place**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Town Clerk as circulated with the agenda.

At this point, Cllr Marilyn Badcock, who is Vice-Chairman of the District Council's Licensing Committee, and Cllrs Michael Badcock and Julie Mayhew-Archer, who act as substitutes for members on that Committee, asked the Town Clerk whether they had an interest in this particular item which required them to leave the meeting. The Town Clerk stated that he did not consider that they had an interest from the Town Council's point of view but that as licensing was a quasi-judicial process, he did wonder whether they could be deemed to have an interest if this matter as then later discussed at the District Council; however this matter was ultimately for the Member to decide on. Following this advice, Cllrs Marilyn Badcock, Michael Badcock and Julie Mayhew-Archer decided that they did have an interest in this matter which required them to leave the meeting at this point.

In introducing this item, Cllr Sandy Lovatt, Chairman of the Committee, reminded Members that this matter had arisen following an application by the Veg Van to trade on the Market Place for a couple of hours each Friday morning. Following the receipt of legal advice it had become clear that street trading was prohibited on the Market Place under regulations made by the District Council subsequent to the adoption of the provisions of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1982. He would like to see the Market Place become an area where street trading could be permitted and was considering putting a motion to the next meeting of the District Council in that regard.

The Chairman then introduced Mr Robert Draper, the Shared Licensing Team Leader at the Vale of White Horse District Council who had kindly agreed to attend the meeting so that he could explain the District Council's position directly to Members and also answer any queries which they may have.

Mr Draper stated that the Licensing Team had a three year rolling work programme and that it was intended that street trading be reviewed during 2014 as part of this

programme. An initial scoping exercise had already commenced. This was a complex area of regulation which had implications for the whole of the District and a change of policy was not to be taken lightly. There would need to be a 12 week consultation period and there would also be consideration of a joint policy with South Oxfordshire District Council.

Mr Draper then outlined the respective positions of the two authorities. South Oxfordshire worked on a consent street policy where, subject to the provisions of the regulations, consent may be given for trading on any street. Applications were dealt with on an individual basis with consultations taking place with organisations such as County Council Highways, town and parish councils and the local business community. The cost of a street trading licence was £100 per month. The Vale of White Horse District Council's policy worked in a different way and as based upon streets either being consent streets or prohibited streets. Within Abingdon, street trading was prohibited with the exception of a number of areas designated as consent streets.

Mr Draper stated that most local authorities now take the approach which South Oxfordshire District Council takes and he considered that this was a more even handed approach compared with the current policy and one which would overcome the Town Council's concerns. It was acknowledged that the current policy needed updating and it was the intention that the Licensing section would consult across both district council areas. Consultation was an important part of the process as without proper and effective consultation, any changes would be open to legal challenge and that would mean that costs would increase significantly.

Mr Draper had already stated that scoping had commenced and much of his section's capacity during this year would be taken up on completing work on the Taxi Licensing Policy. However, it was the intention that following the drafting of a new street trading policy in the third and fourth quarters of 2013/14 this matter would go out to consultation in the spring of 2014 with a view to a new policy being adopted in the third / fourth quarter of 2014/15 (i.e. by 31<sup>st</sup> March 2015).

A Member raised the issue of the fee for street trading, which Mr Draper had stated was £100 per month in South Oxfordshire, and felt that this would preclude smaller traders from operating as street trading would not be viable. In response, Mr Draper stated that the fee for street trading would be part of the consultation across both areas. However, the policy would not necessarily place a greater or lesser value on specific types of enterprise; the fee was designed to cover the entire range of activity. The Member also stated that she was getting fed up with joint policies across the two districts which always seemed to be policies from South Oxfordshire District Council. Abingdon-on-Thames was in the Vale of White Horse district and why did it have to have a joint policy with South Oxfordshire District Council? Mr Draper stated that the South and Vale were working together with a joint officer base and by doing so this increased efficiencies for both Councils. The two areas were also very similar in make-up and therefore a joint policy was appropriate.

The Chairman of the Committee posed a question as to what action would be taken if the District Council passed a motion at its June meeting to review street trading policy. Mr Draper stated that if the Council made this decision then it would be necessary to re-prioritise the workload within the licensing team. However, there was a statutory basis to much of the existing workload and if this matter was re-prioritised then the team would have to cease undertaking certain other tasks. A Member queried whether it would be possible to review the current regulations and simply

make the Market Place a consent street. Mr Draper responded that in these circumstances the District Council would need to consult with the relevant bodies in Abingdon but a view may be taken as to whether it would be better to undertake this work as part of the planned review.

Members expressed views on whether the licensing policy should be the same across the both the South and Vale District Council areas. One member felt that an assumption that the two policies would be the same was pre-judging the matter but another Member stated that as the areas of the two authorities were very similar, why would the policies be different?

In response to a question from a Member and in the light of the advice given in the report of the Town Clerk, a Member queried whether a tombola on the Market Place came under the category of street trading or provision of services; Mr Draper responded that from his knowledge of a tombola, he would judge that this was a provision of a service.

In response to a suggestion that the Veg Van become part of a membership scheme whereby payment for the goods was not made on the Market Place itself, Mr Draper stated that the van would still come under the street trading provisions as ultimately a payment was being made for goods supplied. In response to a query from a Member regarding the powers of the District Council to regulate trading on private land, Mr Draper stated that street trading provisions applied to any land within 15 metres of the highway and to which the public had free access; consequently included the Market Place.

In summing the discussions up, Cllr Sandy Lovatt thanked Mr Draper for explaining the position and answering Members' queries. This had proved to be very useful. The Council wanted to remove what they considered an anomaly in the regulations and allow the Council to have control over its own Market Place. He considered that re-designating the Market Place as a consent street would assist in the short term. The Town Clerk reminded Members of the provisions of the Market Place Act 1978 and the restrictions that this placed on trading and stated that this would be a matter which the Town Council would need to consider, particularly if the Market Place became a consent street.

Mr Draper stated that he understood the Town Council's position but this was not his decision. However he would be concerned over any piecemeal amendments to the street trading provisions for the District Council area. In response to a Member's query he stated that the District Council Cabinet Member with responsibility for these matters was the Leader, Cllr Matthew Barber.

#### **Resolved**

- i. that Mr Draper be thanked for his attendance at the Committee
- ii. that the report of the Town Clerk be adopted.

*Note that the section of the report in relation to the carousel in the Market Place was not resolved and the issue of whether Members wished to allow a carousel, any conditions they may wish to place on the carousel and a delegation to the Town Clerk in that regard should therefore be taken forward to the meeting of the Town Council.*

*Mr Robert Draper left the meeting at this point.*

*Cllrs Marilyn Badcock, Michael Badcock and Julie Mayhew-Archer re-entered the meeting at this point, it being 8.20pm.*

F8 **Choose Abingdon Partnership (ChAPS)**

The Committee received and noted the draft minutes of the Choose Abingdon Partnership Board Meeting which took place on 26<sup>th</sup> March 2013 and the minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the Choose Abingdon Partnership which took place on 21<sup>st</sup> May 2013, as circulated to Members. It was noted that in accordance with the agreement with the Partnership, as both of these sets of minutes were draft minutes, these should be considered as confidential and for Members only at this stage.

Ms Heather Brown, Choose Abingdon Partnership Manager, outlined some of the ongoing work of the Partnership in terms of the various projects including the cycling event; the community shop; and the Abingdon Portal. She stated that in relation to the High Street innovation funding, there was a sum of £47,000 which had been carried forward into the new financial year and for which the Partnership was responsible. She was currently reviewing the way in which the Choose Abingdon card updated its membership via e-mail.

In response to a query from a Member regarding any conditions and projects for which the £47,000 related to, a member of the Partnership Board stated that there had been a paper which had been submitted to the Board which detailed the various projects.

**Resolved** that the draft minutes of the Choose Abingdon Partnership Board meeting of 26<sup>th</sup> March 2013 and of the Annual General Meeting of Choose Abingdon which took place on 21<sup>st</sup> May 2013 be approved

F9 **Communications Sub-Committee**

The Committee received and considered the minutes of the meeting of the Communications Sub Committee which took place on 19<sup>th</sup> March, 17<sup>th</sup> April and 16<sup>th</sup> May 2013.

The Chairman of the Committee, Cllr Marilyn Badcock, referred Members to Minute 8 of the meeting of 16<sup>th</sup> May 2013 where it was stated that:

*“It was **resolved** that the Go Live date should be scheduled for Tuesday 28 May 2013, and that delegation be given to the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Communications Sub-Committee for the final say on whether Go Live should proceed. It was further **resolved** that if the Chairman and Vice-Chairman perceive that there are areas that need further consideration in relation to the portal, then the decision for Go Live should be referred back to the Communication Sub-Committee for further deliberation.”*

Cllr Marilyn Badcock stated that she had not been properly consulted regarding the “Go Live” of the portal and it had gone live without her permission. She was very dissatisfied with this. She stated that since launch, the content had improved and if her view had been asked at this stage, she would now have given her consent.

The Chairman of the Committee, Cllr Sandy Lovatt, stated that the launch had been poorly handled and it was not for officers to decide on whether the portal should have gone live. However, the portal had improved over the last week and the site looked good. Another Member reminded the Committee that there had been a very clear minute on how this matter should have been handled and it was regrettable that the launch had taken place outside of the instructions given by the Communications Sub-Committee.

The Town Clerk stated that the portal had not been launched with the authority which had been intended and he apologised to Members that this had happened.

**Resolved:** that the minutes of the Communications Sub-Committee of 19<sup>th</sup> March, 17<sup>th</sup> April and 16<sup>th</sup> May 2013 be approved, including any recommendations contained therein.

F10 **Grants Sub-Committee**

The Committee received and considered the minutes of the meeting of the Grants Sub-Committee which took place on 20<sup>th</sup> May 2013.

In considering the recommendations of the Committee, a Member stated that she was surprised to see the grant which was being proposed for the Abingdon Traditional Morris Dancers towards repairs and renewals of costume and regalia such as the Morris Dancers' hats. She did not consider that this was an appropriate use of the Council's grants fund as members who undertake these activities could reasonably be expected to pay for their personal costumes. The Committee considered this particular grant and it was approved by eight votes in favour to two votes against; the other grants recommendations were approved nem con and it was **resolved** that the following grants be approved:

Name of Applicant	Reason for the grant application	Grant Awarded
2 <sup>nd</sup> Abingdon Scout Group	Financial assistance with building an extension for improved toilet facilities. As well as replacing existing guttering, metal framed windows and two fire doors.	£1,000 (b)
Abingdon College & District Film Society	Assist with costs for Summer Film Event on 8 June 2013 which has a specific focus on access for all.	£310 (a)
Abingdon Traditional Morris Dancers	Repairs and renewal of costume and regalia i.e. hat renewal and general repair fund.	£600 (a)
Church in Abingdon	Hosting foreign visitors to Abingdon.	£250 (b)

Twining Group		
Friends of Abingdon	Publicity for Heritage Open Weekend.	£600 (d)
Oxfordshire Play Association	Armed Forces Play Day at Dalton Barracks 2013.  Report from the 2012 Play Day at Dalton Barracks is available from the Clerk to the Sub-Committee.	£500 – the Play Association to notify all Abingdon Primary schools of the event. (b)
Pathfinders Youth Canoe Club Abingdon	To buy and erect shed for store of boats and equipment, plus changing facilities.	£1,000 (f)

It was noted that the above grants were being awarded in pursuance of the Council's powers, as noted immediately after the name of the body being awarded the grant, as follows:

- (a) Local Government Act 1972, section 145;
- (b) Local Government Act 1972, section 137;
- (c) Local Government and Rating Act 1997, part III, section 31;
- (d) Local Government Act 1972, section 144;
- (e) Local Government Act 1972, section 142 (2A);
- (f) Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976, section 19.
- (g) Local Government Act 1972, section 133.

It was further **Resolved** that the minutes of the Grants Sub-Committee which took place on 20<sup>th</sup> May 2013 be approved together with any other recommendations contained therein.

#### F11 **Matters Referred**

It was noted that there was one matter referred from the County Hall Museum Management Committee of 14<sup>th</sup> May 2013 which was being considered as part of the business under Minute 12, Financial and General report.

#### F12 **Financial and General Report**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Town Clerk / Responsible Financial Officer as circulated with the agenda.

##### 1. **Schedule of Accounts**

It was noted that the schedule of accounts from 1<sup>st</sup> February to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2013 had not been circulated with the agenda as there remained some work

to complete the detail on the spreadsheets. The Committee **resolved** that when the schedules were available that they should be circulated to Members with a timescale given of one week for Members to ask any questions /make comments and then the approval of those schedules should be delegated to the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Committee.

2. Financial Accounts for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2013

The Committee received and considered the Council's draft financial statement for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2013. The Town Clerk had made a number of comments in his report relating to the accounts. It was noted that as at 31<sup>st</sup> March the Council's general fund, which did not include capital receipts, deferred grants or earmarked reserves, had increased from £290,468 to £324,451. This had been very close to the projection which had been made in January when the Council set its budget, with the difference on the general fund being £537 positive.

Members noted that by statute the Council would be considering its annual return for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2013, together with the statement of accounts at the Council meeting due to take place on 12<sup>th</sup> June 2013.

3. Management Accounts

The Committee received and considered the detailed management accounts for the services which come under the responsibility of the Finance and General Purposes Committee, together with the summary reports for the cost centres across the whole of the Council. It was noted that detailed management accounts for the other cost centres had been considered by both the County Hall Museum Management Committee and the Amenities and Recreation Committee.

It was **resolved**:

That the management accounts for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2013 be approved by the Council.

4. Earmarked reserves

The Committee considered the earmarked reserves held by the Council as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2013. This included a recommendation from the County Hall Museum Management Committee that £22,497 of the underspend on the 2012/13 year should be transferred into earmarked reserves.

It was **resolved** that the Council's earmarked reserves as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2013, as contained in the schedule provided within the report of the Town Clerk and also reflected in the Council's statement of accounts for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2103 be approved as being sufficient for the Council's business purposes.

## 5. Audit Matters

Members noted that the internal auditor would be completing his work in relation to the audit for 2012/13 on 10<sup>th</sup> June 2013 and it was anticipated that on that day he would at that date sign off the internal audit certificate. It could then be emailed out to Members so that it can be considered at the Council meeting on 12<sup>th</sup> June 2013. It was also noted that the external audit would be carried out during the summer months.

**Resolved:** that the Town Clerk's report be approved as set out above.

## F13 Community Fund Applications

The Committee considered the two applications detailed in the report of the Town Clerk for potential funding from the Council's Community Fund.

In relation to the Abingdon Bridge, the Chairman of the Committee, Cllr Sandy Lovatt, stated that he was the Council's representative on this organisation and he felt they had achieved much over the last few months. There was lots of energy within the organisation and they were being disciplined in their approach to fundraising. This was supported by another member of the Committee who felt that the organisation had delivered what they said they would and that the remaining balance due to them should now be released.

A Member stated that The Bridge had raised £19,000 but this actually included £6,250 from the Town Council; this had not been made clear until the question had been asked by a Councillor. She felt that the second half of the funding should now be released but it should be made clear to the organisation that whilst the Council was funding the project this year, it would not be able to do so next year and they should have alternative sources of funding organised.

It was proposed by Cllr Marilyn Badcock and seconded by Cllr Alison Rooke and **resolved** by nine votes in favour and zero against and one abstention that the second half of the grant allocated by the Council from the Community Fund and totalling £6,250 should be released in accordance with the Council's powers under Section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972.

Members considered an application from the South and Vale Carers' Centre for a sum of £5,000 to be released from the Council's Community Fund. The Committee felt that the work of the Carers' Centre was important but considered that there were aspects of the application which required further elaboration and clarification. It was noted that the Council's grant for 2012/13 was £1,000 and whilst it was understood that funding from other organisations, principally the County Council, had been drastically reduced, it was not clear from within the supporting letter as to why the Centre was requesting a five-fold increase in the grant from the Town Council. Members required further information as to why this increase was being requested. It was noted that whilst this was an application from the Community Fund rather than the Council's general grants fund, the form in relation to the general grants fund did seek to capture all the information which was required and Members asked that the organisation be requested to fill in the Council's usual grant form.

Members noted that the accounts did not provide a breakdown of what other towns and parishes contributed to the organisation, and were interested in this information.

Cllr Marilyn Badcock proposed that a grant of £2,000 be awarded to the South and Vale Carers' Centre; however this proposal was not seconded.

It was then **resolved** by eight votes in favour, zero against and two abstentions, that the South and Vale Carers' Centre be requested to provide further information regarding their grant application and that they also be requested to fill in the grant application form which would then be considered at the meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee on 10<sup>th</sup> September 2013.

Following discussion, Members did not consider it necessary for the organisation to make a presentation direct to the Committee.

F14 **Publicity**

Members considered that the Abingdon Bridge should be requested to make it clear in their publicity that a grant of £12,500 had been awarded towards their alcohol and substance abuse project.

A Member stated that when Past Mayors' badges had been introduced in 2000, those Past Mayors who had been Freeman had been issued with a yellow ribbon rather than a dark green ribbon. Subsequently, when Sir Hugo Brunner was appointed a Freeman of the Town, he was awarded a Freeman's badge and when Mrs Janet Morgan was appointed a Freeman of the Town, she had been awarded a bar which had the words "Freeman," to attach to her Past Mayor's badge.

All the remaining individual Freemen were Past Mayors and had Past Mayors' badges; however, they had yet to be awarded their Freemen's bars.

The Committee considered that the bars should be awarded and **resolved** that this take place at the meeting of the Town Council on Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> September 2013. Hopefully this would give sufficient notice to Freemen so they would be able to attend; if they were not, then the Town Clerk would make separate arrangements for the bar to be given to those unable to attend. It was further **resolved** that publicity be given to the award of the Freemen's bars at the September meeting.

**SECTION II (Excluding the public and the press)**

F15 **Exclusion of the public, including the press**

The Chairman moved and it was **resolved**:

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.

F16 **Confidential Appendix**

The Committee received and considered the confidential appendix to the minutes of the meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 12<sup>th</sup> March

2013 and **resolved** that these be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

F17 **Matters Arising**

There were no matters arising which were not covered elsewhere on the agenda.

F18 **Matters Referred**

Guildhall Committee, 16<sup>th</sup> May 2013

The confidential report of the Town Clerk in relation to the above was received and considered.

The Committee endorsed the decision of the Guildhall Committee regarding the length of the lease to be offered to Oxfordshire County Council in relation to the ground floor of Roysse Court.

In relation to the Council's development of the first floor of Roysse Court for office accommodation it was noted that the Guildhall Committee had resolved that:

- (i) A Working Group consisting of Cllr Kate Nobes plus a Liberal Democrat Member was appointed in relation to the Roysse Court offices, this group to work with the officers on the detail of the office improvements and move. The Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group, Cllr Alison Rooke, reported that her group had nominated Cllr Lesley Legge to be a member of the Working Group in relation to the Roysse Court offices.
- (ii) The Working Group met with Ridge on 28<sup>th</sup> May at 10 am.
- (iii) A request be made to the Finance and General Purposes Committee, at its meeting of 4<sup>th</sup> June 2013, to delegate full powers to undertake the Project, to the Guildhall Committee.
- (iv) The specification for tender to be brought forward for approval at the Guildhall Committee meeting on 13<sup>th</sup> June 2013.

In relation to resolution iii) the request to delegate this matter was being made on the basis that the Guildhall Committee would be meeting on a monthly basis and that there will be a need for frequent reporting back and key decisions to be made, particularly during the summer months.

There were three recommendations which were being made to the Finance and General Purposes Committee. The first recommendation is detailed in the Confidential Appendix as it sets out the budget for the work which is planned for the Roysse Court Offices and to give publicity to this budget at this stage would be potentially prejudicial to the Council's procurement process. This was agreed by the Committee.

The Committee **resolved** that recommendation ii) that the work to be undertaken should be in accordance with the feasibility study as agreed by the Guildhall Committee, be agreed.

In relation to the recommendation iii) as detailed in the Guildhall Committee minutes, a Member queried how the mechanism would work whereby the Town Clerk would liaise with the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Finance and General Purposes Committee and of the Guildhall Committee regarding the exercise of the delegations. and the provisions that if it were deemed by these members that the delegation was being exceeded in terms of financial or policy terms then the matter would be referred back to the Finance and General Purposes Committee. He considered that this delegation may be difficult to operate due to the overlapping membership of the committees and queried the legality of the delegation as proposed.

The Committee therefore **deferred** its decision in relation to this matter and asked the Town Clerk to advise the Town Council direct regarding how this can be taken forward.

#### Amenities and Recreation Committee 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2013

The Committee approved the recommendation of the above Committee as detailed in that Committee's minutes and within the confidential report of the Town Clerk.

A Member stated that a resident had raised a concern regarding how fly-tipping on the A34 was affecting the Wildmoor allotment site. It was stated that this matter had not been raised previously at the Amenities and Recreation Committee and the Town Clerk would endeavour to find out more so that the Committee could be advised.

#### F19 Property Matters

The Committee received and considered the confidential report of the Town Clerk in relation to the above.

It was **resolved** that a property working group consisting of Cllrs Marilyn Badcock and Helen Pighills be established to undertake the work as detailed in the confidential report of the Town Clerk.

#### F20 Staffing Matters

The Committee received and considered the confidential report of the Town Clerk in relation to the above. The report, including its recommendations, were adopted. Members are also referred to the confidential appendix to these minutes in relation to staffing matters.

The meeting rose at 9.45 pm.