

Abingdon-on-Thames Town Council

Draft Minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee

Held on 10th September 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	Chairman Planning & Highways Committee
Cllr Iain Littlejohn	Chairman Audit and Performance Sub-Committee
Cllr Patrick Lonergan	
Cllr Monica Lovatt	
Cllr Julie Mayhew-Archer	Chairman County Hall Museum Management Committee

In Attendance

Mrs Susan Whipp	Treasurer
Mr Nigel Warner	Town Clerk (Clerk to the meeting)
Ms Heather Brown	Choose Abingdon Partnership Manager

F41 Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllr Samantha Bowring (Mayor of Abingdon-on-Thames) and Cllr Helen Pighills.

F42 Declarations of Interest

None

F43 Minutes

The Committee received and considered the minutes of the meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 4th June 2013 and of the special meetings held on 24th June, 2nd July and 1st August 2013, as circulated with the agenda.

In relation to the meeting of 1st August 2013, Cllr Patrick Lonergan stated that although he was listed in attendance at the meeting, he should have been listed as a Member of the Committee. Members agreed that the minutes should be amended accordingly.

Resolved: that the minutes of the meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 4th June 2013 and of the special meetings held

on 24th June, 2nd July and 1st August 2013, be agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

F44 **Matters Arising**

In relation to Minute F6, Community Fund Applications, the Chairman of the Committee, Cllr Sandy Lovatt, reported that the Bridge was making good progress in relation to putting sustainable funding in place to meet the needs of the organisation in the future.

In relation to Minute F7, Trading on the Market Place, the Chairman of the Committee reported that at the District Council meeting on 17th July 2013 he had proposed a motion, seconded by Cllr Jason Fiddaman:

That Council instructs officers to bring forward the planned review of the policy on street trading for the whole district, and in particular to consider including as consent streets in Abingdon the following areas of the Town Centre:

- a. The Market Place;*
 - b. The Undercroft of the County Hall Museum;*
 - c. The Abbey Gateway;*
 - d. Bath Street from the High Street to Stratton Way;*
 - e. Old Station Yard;*
 - f. The High Street from the Market Place to Ock Street;*
- and to bring a report to the General Licensing Committee for consideration.*

This had been resolved accordingly by the District Council.

(Cllr Iain Littlejohn entered the meeting at this point, it being 7.10pm).

In response to a query from a Member, the Town Clerk stated that following clarification from the District Council, entertainments, which included tombola stalls, fell outside the definition of street trading and therefore were not subject to the restrictions of either District Council Street Trading regulations or the Market Place Act 1978. However, such activities would still require permission from the Town Council as the land owner.

In relation to Minute F8, Choose Abingdon Partnership, it was reported that the Local Authority representation was now as follows:

Abingdon-on-Thames Town Council, Cllrs Iain Littlejohn and Patrick Lonergan;
Oxfordshire County Council: Cllrs Neil Fawcett and Richard Webber;
Vale of White Horse District Council; Cllrs Marilyn Badcock and Sandy Lovatt.

Ms Heather Brown, Choose Abingdon Partnership Manager, entered the meeting at this point, it being 7.18pm.

In relation to Minute F14, Publicity, the Chairman reported that a photo shoot was organised with Abingdon Bridge in relation to the grant which had been awarded towards their alcohol and substance abuse project.

In relation to the minutes of 24th June 2013, Minute F24 – Grant Applications, a Member reported that she had attended a concert at St Nicolas' Church and was pleased to report that this had been very well supported.

F45 **Statements and questions from the public**

None

F46 **Choose Abingdon Partnership**

The Committee received and noted the draft minutes of the Choose Abingdon Partnership Board of 25th June 2013.

The Choose Abingdon Partnership Manager, Ms Heather Brown, reported that there had been a further meeting of the Board that day, 10th September 2013. There had also been an extraordinary General Meeting which had approved a new constitution for the Partnership.

Ms Brown stated to Members that she was always pleased to talk to any Councillor regarding the work of the Partnership and to answer queries.

Resolved: that the draft minutes of the Choose Abingdon Partnership Board of 25th June 2013 be noted.

F47 **Audit and Performance Sub-Committee**

The Committee received and considered the minutes of the Audit and Performance Sub-Committee of 5th September 2013.

Cllr Iain Littlejohn, Chairman of the Committee, reported that the internal audit report had been a very positive one. There were four recommendations which had been made by the internal auditor and the Committee had agreed a suggested response. In response to a query from a Member, Cllr Littlejohn stated that the officers were implementing an improved system to deal with debtors and the Committee had been comfortable with the work in this regard.

Resolved: that the minutes of the Audit and Performance Sub-Committee of 5th September 2013 be approved together with the Council's response to the internal audit report for 2012/13.

F48 **Communications Sub-Committee**

The Committee received and considered the minutes of the meetings of the Communications Sub-Committee which took place on 2nd and 22nd July 2013, as circulated with the agenda.

It was noted that there was a recommendation that the Communications Strategy, as attached to the minutes of 2nd July 2013, should be approved.

The Chairman of the Communications Sub-Committee, Cllr Marilyn Badcock, moved the adoption of the strategy. She stated that the strategy was clear and precise and outlined what the Council needed. The strategy would evolve over time and provided a tool for the Council in the area of communications.

(Cllr Alison Rooke entered the meeting at this point, it being 7.34 pm)

A Member stated that there were a number of corrections in relation to layout, punctuation and grammar which needed to be resolved before the strategy was finally adopted.

A Member asked whether or not the Service Level Agreement in relation to hosting and support for the website had been agreed and signed, as resolved by the Finance and General Purposes Committee at its meeting on 1st August 2013. The Town Clerk was requested to check in this regard.

It was **resolved** that the minutes of the Communications Sub-Committee which took place on 2nd and 22nd July 2013 be approved, together with any recommendations contained therein.

It was **recommended** that the communications strategy be approved, subject to final proof reading and correction of any errors which are found as a result.

F49 **Grants Sub-Committee**

The Committee received and considered the minutes, together with the recommendations contained therein, of the meeting of the Grants Sub-Committee which took place on 2nd September 2013, as circulated with the agenda.

The Committee carefully considered each of the grant recommendations.

A Member queried why there was a recommendation at Minute 13 that the application by the Stroke Club (Abingdon) be refused. Members of the Grant Sub-Committee stated that the application had been refused for two reasons. Firstly, on the application the question as to how many members of the organisation lived in Abingdon had been answered as zero. On the face of this information, this ruled the organisation out from receiving a grant as the powers under which grants are given meant that they had to be to the benefit of Abingdon residents. The second issue was that the organisation did not

appear to have a bank account and any grant given would have been through a cheque paid into an individual's bank account. Another Member of the Grants Sub-Committee emphasised that Members of the Sub-Committee had considered that this was an organisation doing good work but that the application was deficient in these regards.

Members noted that the club was to be informed that they could reapply for a grant and the Committee agreed that Cllr Michael Badcock and the Choose Abingdon Partnership Manager, Ms Heather Brown, who had both had contact with the club, would make contact with the club to assist them in this regard.

A Member pointed out that at Minute 14a, there was reference made to the "Arthur Preston Plague" and this should refer to the "Arthur Preston Plaque".

It was **resolved** that the recommendations of the Grants Sub-Committee be endorsed as follows:

Name of Applicant	Reason for the grant application	Grant awarded
Abingdon Street Pastors (c)	More regular street patrols – every Saturday 10pm-2.30am.	£750
Action for Children (b)	Funding of coach to take families to Bournemouth in 2014.	£550: grant will be released on production of coach cost receipts.
ATOM Science Festival (d)	Cost of hiring Guildhall for Festival on Friday and Saturday.	£1,500: up to £1,500 (2 days' hire) will be transferred from the Grants budget to the Guildhall budget on the production of the Guildhall invoice for 2 days' hire – up to maximum of £1,500.
Dunmore Pre-School (f)	Develop outdoor play area with a small 'Forest School' and a growing area for vegetables and fruit.	£1,000 – Resolved that be given to the Chairman and Vice-Chairman, in consultation with the Deputy Town Clerk, to reconsider the application on the production of plans/ listed items which identify what the pre-school intend to use the grant for and to release grant accordingly.

		The pre-sch. should also be informed of other available grants i.e. VWHDC Capital and New Homes grants and the community grants via their local OCC councillor.
Stroke Club (Abingdon) (b)	Set-up costs for website and subsequent running costs.	£500. Refused Inform Club to reapply, and to include details re their charity bank account along with proof of the actual number of members from Abingdon. Inform Club that they should also seek grants from local parish councils where their members live.

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 a shop front redecoration grant, funded from the Joint Environmental Trust balances, be approved in the sum of £825 and awarded to Lewis Baker for redecoration of the shop premises at 5-7 Bridge Street, Abingdon-on-Thames.

It was further **resolved** that that the minutes of the Grant Sub-Committee which took place on 2nd September 2013 be approved together with any other recommendations contained therein.

F50 **Personnel Sub-Committee**

The Committee received and considered the minutes, together with any recommendations contained therein, of the meeting of the Personnel Sub-Committee which took place on 29th August 2013, as circulated with the agenda.

The Chairman of the Personnel Sub-Committee, Cllr Marilyn Badcock, stated that the Sub-Committee was reviewing all of the Council's personnel policies and introducing new ones where necessary. This was with a view to issuing a staff handbook by the end of the year.

She reported that the four policies which had been considered at the meeting in August were now subject to consultation with staff and the results of this consultation would be brought back to the Personnel Sub-Committee at its meeting on 3rd October 2013. This meeting would also consider the remaining policies which were to be revised or introduced and at the November meeting of the Committee an appraisal system would be considered. The Committee noted that at Minute 7 the date given for the Finance and General Purposes Committee in November 2013 was incorrect in that there was no scheduled meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee; however it was anticipated there would be a special meeting during that month and the relevant policies could come to that committee.

It was **resolved** that the minutes of the Personnel Sub-Committee of 29th August 2013 be approved.

F51 **Matters Referred**

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

Amenities and Recreation Committee 28th August 2013

The Committee had been informed that there were an increasing number of cases where long standing residents of Abingdon were having to leave the area to receive residential or nursing care. This, under present Council charges, made their estate liable to be charged double rates for burials in the Town's cemeteries.

The Committee understood that other councils had encountered similar issues. Some had now changed their rules so that if a resident moved out of the parish they were still entitled to the parish burial charges if they died within that two year period; after that time, double rates were charged.

The Committee discussed the various aspects of this issue and **recommended** through the Finance and General Purposes Committee that the Parish rate for burial in the town's cemeteries should apply up to two years for those leaving the area for residential or nursing care needs. Officers of the Council would have discretionary powers taking into consideration personal

circumstances and the final arbiter would be the Chairman or the Vice-Chairman of the Amenities and Recreation Committee.

Guildhall Committee of 12th September 2013

Further to the report of the Town Clerk, Members were updated on a meeting with the Heritage Lottery Fund which had taken place earlier that day. Cllr Iain Littlejohn, the Chairman of the Guildhall Committee, stated that the meeting had been very positive but one of the matters which had arisen as a result of this meeting was that the submission date for any application would be the middle of November 2013.

The Town Clerk stated that the consequence of this revised timescale was that it was no longer necessary to ask the Committee for a recommendation that the matter be considered directly by the Council at its meeting on 25th September 2013. Instead, a proposal would come forward directly to the Council meeting that, following consideration of any grant application by the Guildhall Committee at its meeting in October, the Heritage Lottery Fund application should then be considered by the Finance and General Purposes Committee and by the Town Council at special meetings to be organised early in November.

A Member stated that Councillors understood that in these circumstances special meetings would be required and there may need to be a number of meetings on the same evening.

F52 Financial and General Report

The Committee received and considered the report of the Town Clerk / Responsible Financial Officer in relation to the above.

1. Schedule of Accounts

Resolved that the schedule of accounts for the period February to July 2013 be approved.

2. Management Accounts

The Committee received and considered the summary management accounts for all the Council cost centres for the financial year to date. It was noted that detailed reports were available on request and would be circulated to the Committee during the budget review in the autumn, and following the financial year end.

It was **resolved** that the summary management accounts for the year to date be approved.

3. Budget for 2014/15

The Chairman of the Committee, Cllr Sandy Lovatt, drew Members' attention to this section of the Town Clerk's report. The budget 2014/15 would be challenging as it was understood that the grant which had been given by central government to partly offset the effect of the reduction in the council tax base, and which amounted to £101, 397, was due to be phased out over a five year period. This grant was the equivalent of 7.6% of the Council's budgeted income for 2013/14. A sum of approximately £20,000 per year would have to be found and this did not take account of inflationary pressures which, if compounded by 2% per year, in real terms meant that savings of roughly double that amount would need to be saved.

This matter was noted for the budget cycle.

4. Monday Market

The Committee noted that the Monday Market was established by the Royal Charter in November 1556, and that its origins may be traced beyond that. However, in order to protect the rights of the Market, the Council had been advised that it should register this Market with the Land Registry by the end of October 2013. If this was not done then it would make it easier for another body to challenge the Council's right to hold such markets.

The Council had also been advised that it would be prudent to pass a resolution under Part Three of the Food Act 1984 to run alongside that of the Charter in order to provide additional protection.

It was **resolved**:

1. That the Borough Charter of 1556 be registered with the Land Registry, in particular its provisions for the Monday Market.
2. That the provisions of the Food Act 1984 also to be applied to the Monday Market.

In response to a question from a Member, the Town Clerk stated that the Michaelmas and Runaway Fairs could not be registered with the Land Registry because they were fairs under statute (Oxfordshire Act 1985).

5. Heart of Abingdon Heritage Trail

The Committee considered the letter dated 5th September 2013 from Ann Berkeley, the project co-ordinator for the Heart of Abingdon Heritage Trail. As part of this project, the Abingdon Area Archaeological Society and the Friends of Abingdon had formed a new group for volunteers which had commissioned five historical interpretation boards in the town centre. In order to be allowed to locate the boards in both East and West St Helen Street, the County Council required them to be covered for public liability insurance. The proposal from the group was that Abingdon-on-Thames Town Council

assume ownership so that they could be included within the Council's public liability policy.

As long as the boards were not vandalised they would require no ongoing maintenance and had a guaranteed life of 10 years.

Members welcomed this project and it was proposed by Cllr Marilyn Badcock, seconded by Cllr Alison Rooke and **resolved** that the Heritage Trail Boards, as detailed in Ann Berkeley's letter, be accepted into the ownership of Abingdon-on-Thames Town Council and added to the Council's public liability insurance.

6. Shop Watch Scheme

Members considered a request from Thames Valley Police for the Council to formally support the "Shop Watch Scheme". Members had received a copy of the Shop Watch Scheme logo together with a briefing paper from the Police. In summary the scheme was similar to the Pub Watch Scheme and enabled shops to ban people from the group of shops covered by the scheme in cases where they "offend," which was taken from the correspondence to primarily mean shop-lifting.

Members agreed with the sentiment and the principles behind the scheme. However they had a number of concerns. Members appreciated that shoplifting was a problem but were concerned about the welfare of individuals, perhaps with children and without transport, who if banned from shops, would not be able to buy food for a year in which they were banned from the shops. It was also noted that in the leaflet it stated that the Police "will be supporting it but from 1st October when the scheme will be launched it will be run by the shops themselves, and then putting forward people to ban." Members believed that more direct involvement from the Police would be important in ensuring that the scheme was operated in a fair and proper manner. Members were also keen to know more about the policies and procedures with regard to how the scheme worked.

Consequently, the Committee deferred a decision as to whether or not it wished to support the scheme and requested that the Town Clerk make enquiries of the Police in relation to these specific questions.

It was **recommended** that the matter be referred to the Town Council Meeting on 25th September 2013.

F53 Community Fund Applications

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

An application had been received from South and Vale Carers for a grant of £5,000 as detailed in their application form, which had been circulated with the agenda.

The Committee considered the application together with the organisation's estimates for 2013/14 and their accounts for 2012/13, these financial papers having been circulated as confidential papers. The organisation had stated that with competitive commissioning there was a degree of commercial sensitivity about their finances. With regard to the accounts, the 2012/13 accounts were currently being audited and the Town Clerk advised that these could be treated as confidential.

There was considerable debate in relation to this grant application. A Member noted that the organisation had also received £5,000 from Didcot Town Council and therefore considered that the sum being applied for from the Town Council was reasonable.

Another Member pointed out that the grant which the organisation was seeking from the Town Council of £5,000 represented a five-fold increase compared with that which they had been awarded in 2012/13.

A number of points were made in relation to the funding application. A Member felt that the organisation undertook very valuable work and the cost to the public finances of helping carers was much less than the alternative. She stated that in any response to the organisation they should be asked to consider making an application to the Vale of White Horse District Council and South Oxfordshire District Council area committees, although in relation to the Vale grant awards were restricted to capital expenditure. She also stated that the Town Council's Community Fund had been set up precisely to fund these types of organisations who had lost significant revenue following cuts by the principal authorities.

Another Member stated that he was broadly supportive of the application but was nervous with regard to the finances of the organisation and considered that the current year budget and its target towards fundraising was ambitious.

A Member queried whether the Council needed to make judgements regarding the finances of such organisations but was concerned that in giving any grant award it should be made clear that a precedent has not been set for future years.

A Member suggested that in raising money the organisation should consider whether it would be appropriate to engage a professional fundraiser.

It was proposed by Cllr Monica Lovatt and seconded by Cllr Alison Rooke that a grant of £5,000 be awarded to South and Vale Carers from the Community Fund.

An amendment was proposed by Cllr Marilyn Badcock and seconded by Cllr Michael Badcock that the organisation should be asked to target the grant towards the benefit of Abingdon residents and to consider allocating some of the grant towards fundraising activities, although this would not be a condition.

The amendment was not accepted by either the proposer or the seconder and was therefore put to the vote and was **approved** by five votes in favour to three against. It therefore became part of the substantive motion and it was **resolved** that a grant of £5,000 be awarded to South and Vale Carers and that they be requested to target this grant towards the benefit of Abingdon residents, and also to use the grant as appropriate towards fundraising.

Some of the detail at the discussion related specifically to the confidential documents which had been supplied by the South and Vale Carers in support of their grant application; consequently, these comments are detailed within the confidential appendix.

F54 **Consultations received from external bodies**

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

1. Community Governance Review for the Vale of White Horse

Members received and considered a letter from the District Council dated 24th July 2013 which was consulting the Town Council in relation to the draft terms of reference of a community governance review. It was noted that in relation to Abingdon-on-Thames, the draft terms of reference included revising the boundaries of parish wards to make them co-terminous with those of the District Council. It was also noted that across the whole district the review would include “any other matters which the Council (District Council) considers warrant a review”.

Members agreed that the co-terminosity of boundaries with the District Council should be part of the review but a Member raised the issue of the boundary between the new Central and the Fitzharris wards in Bath Street.

Members also considered that the names of the new town wards should be part of the review.

Whilst the consensus of the meeting was that the Council should retain its membership at 21 Councillors a Member considered that a reduction in this number should be scoped in. A Member also suggested that the possibility of having a unitary parish / district authority centred on Abingdon, similar to the old Borough Council, should be explored, although it was not thought that this could be part of such a review.

The Committee considered that this was a matter which the Council should take a view on and **recommended** that consideration of the terms of reference of the District Council’s Community Governance Review of the Vale of White Horse District should be considered by the Town Council at its meeting on 25th September 2013.

2. The Committee noted the consultation from the District Council in relation to the proposed changes to the Council Tax Reduction Scheme. The

Committee did not wish to submit a Council response to this consultation but advised Members that they were free to do so as individuals.

3. Review of Polling Stations.

The Town Clerk reported that an informal pre-consultation had been received from the District Council seeking the Council's views on the current polling arrangements in the town and asking if there were any alternative venues in the town which would be more suitable as polling stations or alternatives for emergency use.

Amongst the issues raised were the following:

- Problems with adequacy of parking for some polling stations, particularly at Trinity Church in Conduit Road at times when children are being taken to or picked up from school.
- Lack of facilities within polling stations for disabled people, in particular a lack of disabled polling booths.
- Distance from some houses to polling stations; an example given was that residents in Mons Way had to travel to the Northcourt Centre to vote.
- Poor signage of polling stations was a general concern. Specific polling stations mentioned were in Preston Road, Gainsborough Green and the Northcourt Centre.
- The District Council should consider whether it is possible to make more use of local schools which in recent years had not been used as often as polling stations. Schools were sometimes ideally located for use as polling stations and it was understood that there were legal powers by which the District Council could require the use of schools. It was suggested that if a school did not consider it possible to allocate a room as a polling station whilst keeping the rest of the school open for the day, they should consider having an "inset day" on the first Thursday of May.

4. Environment Agency Consultation "Challenges and Choices in Relation to River Basin Management".

The Committee advised Councillors that they may wish to respond to this consultation which runs until 22nd December 2013.

F55 **Publicity**

As mentioned previously the Committee considered that publicity should be given to the grant awarded to the Abingdon Bridge.

F56 **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.

SECTION II (Excluding the public and the press)

F57 Confidential Appendix

The Committee received and considered the confidential appendix to the minutes of the meetings of 4th June 2013 and of the special meetings held on 24th June, 2nd July and 1st August 2013, as circulated with the agenda.

Resolved:

That the confidential appendix to the minutes of the meetings of 4th June 2013 and of the special meetings held on 24th June, 2nd July and 1st August 2013 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

F58 Matters Arising

The Committee thanked Cllr Iain Littlejohn, Chairman of the Guildhall Committee, for his assistance in relation the matter of the negotiations on the access road to the Crown and Thistle.

F59 Matters Referred

a) Amenities and Recreation Committee of 28th August 2013

The Committee approved the recommendation of the above Committee that a property working group be established to report to the Amenities and Recreation Committee. It was noted that the working group currently consisted of Cllr Helen Pighills and Cllr Marilyn Badcock and it was **recommended** that the working group be increased to a membership of five Members and that this group be appointed by the Town Council at its meeting on 25th September 2013.

Due to the potential commercial sensitivity of the property matters under consideration, the detailed terms of reference are recommended under the confidential appendix.

b) County Hall Museum Management Committee of 3rd September 2013

The Committee received the report of the matters referred and at the request of the Chairman, Cllr Julie Mayhew-Archer, it was **resolved** not to proceed with the recommendation.

c) Audit and Performance Sub-Committee of 5th September 2013

Resolved: that the confidential report of the Town Clerk in relation to this matter be approved, together with the recommendation contained therein.

F60 **Property Matters**

1. Markets

The Committee received and considered the confidential report of the Market Co-ordinator. The Committee **resolved** that in accordance with the Council's powers under the Food Act 1984 the Council creates markets on the following dates:

- 1st March 2014 - Fairtrade event
- 29th March - Local Excellence Market
- 3rd -5th April - French Market
- 10th May - Fairtrade Tea
- 11th May – Food & Drink Festival (please see attached application)
- 31st May - Local Excellence Market
- 14th June - Summer Craft Fair
- 30th August - Local Excellence Market
- 4th-6th September - French Market
- 22nd November - Local Excellence Market
- 6th December – Christmas Craft Fair

For the avoidance of doubt it was further **resolved** that these were markets were being created for operation on the above days only.

The Committee also received an application from the Rotary Club of Abingdon Vesper to hold a food and drink festival on the Market Place on 11th May 2014. This was further detailed in the club's letter dated 5th September 2013. A Member stated that whilst such events were to the benefit of the town, encouraging people to come into the town centre at weekends, it was important that groups using the Market Place left it tidy so that there was no additional costs to the Town Council and they asked that the Town Council consider a scheme for a deposit in relation to this matter, and that this be considered at a future meeting of this Committee.

A Member stated that sometimes local traders have commented that such markets adversely affect their trade and so if they are trading in the goods relating to the market, they should be invited to have a stall.

After consideration of the application Members **resolved**:

- i. That the application by the Rotary Club of Abingdon Vesper for a food and drink festival on 11th May 2014 be approved and that this should be authorised by the Council as an occasional market under the Food Act 1984.
- ii. That as the net proceeds for all pitch fees would be donated to charity, that the Council should not make a charge to the Rotary Club for the use of the Market Place.

- iii. That in giving permission for this event to take place, the Rotary Club be requested to approach local traders and producers for their involvement at this festival.
- iv. That for the avoidance of doubt, the market was being created by the Town Council to operate only on 11th May 2014.

A Member stated that whilst he was content that no charge should be made for this and similar events, the Council should consider a deposit of £250 being taken for such events, this being refundable subject to no damage being caused to the Market Place, and the Market Place being left in a tidy condition. It was **resolved** that this should be considered by the Committee at its next meeting.

2. The Committee received and considered the confidential report of the Town Clerk in relation to property matters, as further detailed in the confidential appendix.

The Town Clerk, Mr Nigel Warner, declared a non-pecuniary interest in this item. He stated that he was a member of the Rotary Club of Abingdon, which was a separate club to that making the application. However he felt that he should declare this interest to avoid any further misunderstandings.

F61 **Staffing Matters**

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

The Town Clerk and the Treasurer left the meeting during part of the consideration of this item, it being 9.35pm. This matter is further detailed in the confidential appendix.

The meeting rose at 9.43 pm.