

Draft Minutes of the Special Meeting of the Town of Abingdon-on-Thames held at 8.45pm on 11 November 2013 in the Roysse Room, Guildhall, Abingdon-on-Thames.

Present

Cllr Samantha Bowring	Mayor of Abingdon-on-Thames
Cllr Angela Lawrence	Deputy Mayor of Abingdon-on-Thames
Cllr Alice Badcock	
Cllr Marilyn Badcock	
Cllr Michael Badcock	
Cllr Jason Fiddaman	
Cllr Lesley Legge	
Cllr Iain Littlejohn	
Cllr Patrick Lonergan	
Cllr Monica Lovatt	
Cllr Sandy Lovatt	
Cllr Julie Mayhew-Archer	
Cllr Hermann Matheson	
Cllr Aidan Melville	
Cllr Katie Nobes	
Cllr Lorraine Oates	
Cllr Helen Pighills	
Cllr Alison Rooke	
Cllr Andrew Todd	

In Attendance

Mr Nigel Warner	Town Clerk
Mrs Sandra Hill	Deputy Town Clerk (Clerk to the meeting)

SECTION I (Open to the Public Including the Press)

C51 Apologies

Apologies were received from Cllr Jeanette Halliday and Cllr Jan Morter. Cllr Halliday had indicated that as a nearby resident of the Guildhall she would potentially have a pecuniary interest in the matters relating to the Guildhall and therefore had chosen to absent herself from the meeting.

C52 Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

C53 Public participation

The Mayor of Abingdon-on-Thames, Cllr Samantha Bowring, suspended Standing Orders to enable Dr Les Clyne (member of the public) to speak in relation to the recommendations from the Finance & General Purposes Committee.

Mr Clyne stated that five years' ago he was not in favour of the Town Council spending £2.5m for the County Hall Museum Development Project, and is not in favour of the Council spending the proposed sums on the Guildhall Project. He highlighted that the Vale of White Horse District Council had previously

commissioned a cinema survey, and it had concluded that having only one screen would not be a viable option.

Dr Clyne relayed his concerns over the rising costs of the project and the subsequent impact this could have on the ratepayer. The reiterated that plans for the Guildhall must be open and transparent – the public need to know what is happening.

C54 **Meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee of 11th November 2013**

The Chairman relayed the recommendations of the Finance & General Purposes Committee meeting, which took place earlier in the evening.

In considering the recommendations a Member highlighted that the Council had a good reputation with the Heritage Lottery Fund, and that she was in favour of the Town Council applying for funding. She stated that the Council's council tax is comparable with other town council's within Oxfordshire. She urged the Council to apply for capital grants from the Vale of White Horse District Council; applications have to be submitted by the end of November 2013.

Concern was expressed over the loss of council tax through the localisation of council tax support, and the impact this would have on the council's budget over the next five years – it was further relayed that some of the council's reserve was to be used this year, and would this happen again next year? The Town Clerk reported that this would be dependent on the budget set by the Council.

Thanks were relayed to staff, and outside staff such as the quantity surveyor, who had put in a huge amount of work towards the project so far.

On putting recommendation (i) to the vote it was unanimously **resolved**:

(i) to agree that the Council agree to raise a sum of £1,500,000 towards the Guildhall Improvement Project phase 2, this not including any grant from HLF or the sum of £1,000,000 already allocated from the Guildhall Capital Improvement Sum (deferred grant).

On putting recommendation (ii) to the vote it was unanimously **resolved**:

(ii) that authority be delegated to the Town Clerk, in consultation with the development group (Cllrs Iain Littlejohn and Julie Mayhew-Archer) and the review group (Cllrs Sandy Lovatt and Alison Rooke):

On putting recommendation (ii) (a) to the vote it was found 18 in Favour, 0 Against and 1 Abstention and therefore **resolved**:

(a) to submit an application to the HLF for a grant under the Enterprise Fund programme of less than £2 million.

On putting recommendation (iii) to the vote it was found 18 in Favour, 0 Against and 1 Abstention and therefore **resolved:**

- (iii) that subject to a successful grant application to the HLF, the Project then enters the development period, it being noted that at the end of this period the Project will be reviewed by the Council prior to a decision then being made regarding submitting a stage two HLF application to proceed to the delivery stage.

C55 **Exclusion of the public, including the press**

Resolved that the Chairman 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.

SECTION II (Excluding the public and the press)

C56 **Meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee of 11th November 2013**

The meeting further considered recommendation (ii) (b).

Cllr Aidan Melville left the meeting at this point and the public were re-admitted back into the Open Section - the time being 9.22pm.

On being put to the vote it was found 18 in Favour, 0 Against and 1 Abstention and therefore **resolved:**

- (b) to submit an application to the HLF based on the core scheme with enhancements to be included from the list submitted as a confidential paper, and any other such enhancements as are considered necessary on further review, subject to these being contained within a maximum project cost of £4,450,000.

The meeting rose at 9.24pm.