

Abingdon-on-Thames Town Council

**Minutes of the Community Services Committee held on Tuesday
15th September 2020 at 7.00 pm.**

*Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, this meeting was held online in accordance with
The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of
Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales)
Regulations 2020 (“the 2020 Regulations”)*

Present:

Cllr Neil Fawcett	Chair
Cllr Grace Clifton	Substitute for Cllr Alex Greenaway
Cllr Andy Foulsham	
Cllr Jim Halliday	
Cllr Lorraine Oates	
Cllr Charlie Birks, Mayor of Abingdon-on-Thames (Ex-officio)	
Cllr Samantha Bowring, Chair of F & G P Committee (Ex-officio)	

In Attendance:

Miss Louise Brown	Administrative Assistant (Clerk to the meeting)
Mr Nigel Warner	Town Clerk

CS12. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Cllr Alex Greenaway and Cllr Andrew Coveney

CS13. Declarations of Interest

Cllr Jim Halliday declared a non-pecuniary interest in the grant application from Friends of Abingdon as he is a member of the Friends of Abingdon Civic Society.

CS14. Statements and Questions from the Public

None.

CS15. Minutes

The Committee received and considered the minutes of the meeting held on 2nd June 2020.

It was **Resolved** that the minutes of the meeting of the Community Services Committee held on 2nd June 2020 be agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

CS16. Matters Arising

The Committee considered a request received from the Chamber of Commerce with the dates for the 2021 Local Excellence market and regarding the Christmas Extravaganza plans for Saturday 28th November 2020.

At the Summer Events Committee meeting of 14th July it was decided that it was not advisable to plan for a big event under the government guidelines surrounding the Covid-19 pandemic and that a small event would be planned that could be scaled up or down depending on the situation at the time.

The Committee Resolved that the Chamber of Commerce would run a small Christmas market in the day that adhered to the correct social distancing guidelines and then the lights would be switched on in the evening, and it was agreed that the Chamber of Commerce would be asked to complete a risk assessment that adequately covered the steps they would take to make the Christmas market a covid safe event.

CS17. Summer Events Working Group Minutes

It was **Resolved** that the minutes of the meeting of the Summer Events Working Group held on 14th July 2020 be agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

Cllr Jim Halliday thanked Cllr Charlie Birks for laying the wreath on VJ day in his role as Mayor of Abingdon.

CS18. Communications Review Working Group Minutes

It was **Resolved** that the minutes of the meeting of the Communications Review Working held on 10th August 2020 be agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

Cllr Jim Halliday highlighted the importance of ensuring the new website was checked for accessibility and confirmed he will send a list of website checkers to Miss Louise Brown.

At this point Cllr Andy Foulsham joined the meeting. The time being 19:15.

CS19. Grant Applications

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

Community Grants Fund

Following discussion regarding the various applications it was **resolved** that the grant applications be determined as follows:

	Name of Applicant	Purpose of grant, as summarised in the grant application	Grant awarded
1	The Friends of Abingdon Civic Society (b)	Towards the cost of the 2020 Abingdon Heritage Weekend.	£800
2	Abingdon Citizens Advice Bureau (b)	To help cover the costs of PPE equipment needed for the office to reopen and face to face appointments to be reinstated.	£1,500 <i>Will also ask applicant for a more specific breakdown of any further costing with the aim of recommending up to Finance and general Purposes.</i>
3	Abingdon Scouts (b)	To help cover the costs of PPE equipment needed for the Scout meetings to safely reconvene from September onwards.	£1,200

Note that the above grants were made in pursuance of the Council's powers, as noted in column one, as follows (resolved accordingly):

- (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;
- (h) Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976, section 19.

CS19. Financial Report

The Committee received and considered the report of the Treasurer/ RFO in relation to the above, as circulated with the agenda.

Resolved: the report of the Treasurer/ Responsible Financial Officer, including the management accounts up to the 31st July 2020 be approved.

At this point Cllr Lorraine Oates joined the meeting. The time being 19:28.

CS20. Application for regular Market event

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

Members discussed possible issues with social distancing and possible infringement on the councils existing agreements with the coffee shops and kebab van.

It was agreed that, provided that the organisers were able to supply all the relevant paperwork including a risk assessment that adequately covers their Covid-19 plan, and provided that it did not affect the councils existing agreements, then they would be offered a 3 month trial period with a decision being taken after this regarding the long term viability of it.

There was a discussion around the charge for this event. It was **resolved** that provided that the organisers were able to provide proof that the money was going to the charity this would be considered a charitable event and there would be no charge.

CS21. Environmental Implications

Cllr Jim Halliday confirmed he had attended a recent green Scrutiny Committee meeting where it had been noted the Council were actively encouraging markets to move towards a plastic free event and that this should be encouraged across all events taking place on the Market Place.

Cllr Samantha Bowring acknowledged that the adoption of a plastic free policy had been delayed due to Covid and asked for an update of when this might be reconsidered.

The Town Clerk confirmed that while the Covid-19 Pandemic was still an issue there were certain risks involved in reusable items and that there had been an unfortunate, but understandable increase in plastic use.

It was **resolved** that, at this time that may already be difficult for Market traders this would not be strictly enforced but would be considered as soon as health and safety allowed it.

CS22. Publicity

It was **resolved** that the Council would publicise the grants awarded by putting the details up on the website and social media.

CS23. Market Place

Members considered an application for a food vender to locate a mobile unit on the Market Place from which takeaway food (sandwiches, burgers, etc) could be served from 7am to 2pm daily.

A number of concerns were expressed regarding issuing a permit; in summary, the impact on retailers in the vicinity, the mobile unit not being in keeping with the daytime character of the Market Place and the high carbon footprint of the unit. Following debate, the Committee resolved by 4 votes to 3, that the Council do not issue a permit for this unit.

Cllr Charlie Birks asked if we still need Security at the Monday Market.

Cllr Neil Fawcett expressed his concern that social distancing might not be maintained correctly without a presence of security.

It was **resolved** that The Town Clerk would keep this under review and look at scaling back the security to reduce costs while still providing a presence.

CS24. Dates of next meeting

It was resolved that the dates of the next meeting will be communicated out to Councillors once confirmed.

The meeting rose at 8.30 pm.

Signed.....