

Abingdon-on-Thames Town Council
Draft Minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee
on Tuesday 13th June 2017 at 7.00pm
in the Roysse Room, Guildhall, Abingdon-on-Thames.

Present

Cllr Michael Badcock	Chairman
Cllr Dennis Garrett	Vice-Chairman and Chairman of Guildhall Committee
Cllr Alice Badcock	Chairman of Amenities & Recreation Committee
Cllr Samantha Bowring	
Cllr Margaret Crick	Chairman of Planning, Highways & Consultations
Cllr Vicky Jenkins	Chairman of Community Services Committee
Cllr Monica Lovatt	Chairman of CH Museum Management Committee
Cllr Sandy Lovatt	
Cllr Helen Pighills	
Cllr Andrew Todd	

In Attendance

Mr Nigel Warner	Town Clerk
Mr Steve Rich	Head of Services/Assistant Town Clerk
Mrs Susan Whipp	Treasurer/Responsible Financial Officer (Clerk to the meeting)

SECTION I (Open to the Public Including the Press)

F5 **Apologies**

None.

F6 **Declarations of interest**

(Cllr Samantha Bowring entered the meeting, the time being 7:03pm).

Cllr Samantha Bowring and Cllr Margaret Crick both declared a non-pecuniary interest in agenda item 10, the Children's Centres. Cllr Bowring and Cllr Crick have been involved in discussions in relation to Abingdon Carousel who are seeking to provide a service for children's centres in Abingdon and therefore believed that there could be a perception of apparent bias and conflict of interest. Cllr Samantha Bowring made a statement in relation to this matter following which they both left the meeting during discussion of this item.

F7 **Minutes**

The Committee received and considered the minutes of the meetings of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 14th March 2017 and 10th May 2017.

Resolved: that the minutes of the meetings of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 14th March 2017 and 10th May 2017 be agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

F8 **Statements and Questions from the Public**

None.

F9 **Personnel Sub-Committee**

The membership of the Personnel Sub-Committee was discussed.

Resolved: that membership of the Personnel Sub-Committee would comprise of Cllrs Mike Badcock, Dennis Garrett, Sandy Lovatt, Neil Fawcett and Patrick Lonergan.

F10 **Matters Referred**

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

(a) Community Services Committee of 23rd May 2017

Resolved: that the draft grants criteria be approved.

(b) Amenities & Recreation Committee of 24th May 2017

Resolved: that a new tractor plus add-on equipment be purchased and the decision regarding supplier be delegated to the Chairman of Finance and General Purposes Committee and the Town Clerk, and that funding for this be met by £11,000 from the Vehicle and Equipment Replacement reserve and a further £24,000 from the 2016/17 underspend against budget 499/4844 (capital equipment).

F11 **Environmental Working Group**

The Committee received and noted the draft notes of the meeting of the Environmental Working Group held on 9th March 2017.

F12 **Financial Report**

The committee received and considered the report of the Treasurer / RFO. It was noted that the bank reconciliations are now being reviewed monthly by the Chairman of the Finance and General Purposes Committee, in line with the recommendation from the internal auditor.

Resolved that:

- (a) The schedule of accounts for the period 1st February 2017 to 30th April 2017 be approved;
- (b) The management accounts for the period from 1st April 2016 to 31st March 2017 be approved;
- (c) That authority be delegated to the Town Clerk in consultation with the Chairman of the Finance and General Purposes Committee in relation to arrangements for bank deposit accounts.

F13 **Committee terms of reference**

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

It was **recommended**:

- (i) that with the increase in joint working between the Museum and the Guildhall service and the potential for future improved service provision and associated efficiencies, the Town Clerk be requested to draft a report, so that consideration may be given to combining the functions of the current County Hall Museum Committee and the Guildhall Committee in to one committee.
- (ii) that this report be considered by the County Hall Museum Management Committee and the Guildhall Committee in the next cycle of meetings prior to its consideration by the Finance and General Purposes Committee, the latter committee then to make a recommendation to the Council at its meeting in October 2017. *(Note the Finance and General Purposes Committee has the responsibility for matters relating to Democratic representation and management).*
- (iii) that if approved the above change to the Committee terms of reference be amended with effect from the next Annual Meeting of the Council (9th May 2018).
- (iv) that in relation to the other committees, amendments to their terms of reference, in order to improve the way in which the committees work, also be brought forward at a future meeting.

F14 **Grant - Children's Centres**

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

(Having declared non-pecuniary interests, Cllr Samantha Bowring and Cllr Margaret Crick left the meeting, the time being 7:28pm).

The committee discussed the business plan which had been submitted in relation to Abingdon Carousel. It was agreed that further information be sought, and that the Town Clerk would ask the following questions:

1. It is noted that the group have applied to be a registered Charitable Incorporated Organisation. Could you advise of the progress in this regard and whether this status has been granted?
2. Could you provide the governance documents for the organisation i.e. any constitution, charitable scheme etc. and are these in draft form or final form?
3. Could you provide the names of the trustees or committee members of the organisation?
4. Could you explain the process by which individuals become trustees?
5. Could you provide more details in relation to how the staffing expenditure is made up, there being two figures in year 1 – Co-ordinator and session staff (£16,500) and Administrator (£6,000). Councillors would like to know numbers of posts, proposed salary grades, hours per week.
6. Obviously, there are no financial statements, this being a new organisation. Have you set up a bank account and if so please submit copies of the bank statements.
7. It is noted that the area of benefit for the proposed service will include areas beyond the town's boundary. Can you give details of any applications for funding made to other parish councils?
8. It is noted that there is capital expenditure amounting to £5,500 provided for in year 1. Can you explain how this will be funded?
9. In considering the sample timetable Councillors have asked if you could elaborate on a number of funding streams, these being partner groups, grant funded service and grant (plastic bag).
10. Could provide more details of the proposed arrangements in relation to the property at Caldecott School. These include – who is any lease from and to; the terms of any lease agreement and its current status; confirmation of

the rent payable having been agreed; and the ability for Abingdon Carousel to sub-let also having been agreed.

11. It is noted that the business plan is for a three-year period. Could you let explain the thinking in relation to what happens at the end of year three?

The Committee requested that the Town Clerk email a copy of these questions to the Abingdon Carousel and the relevant officer at Oxfordshire County Council, who are considering the application at its cabinet meeting on 20th June 2017. The Town Clerk was also asked to copy in the Leader of the Council and the Leader of the Opposition. The Town Clerk was asked to seek the outcome of this meeting at the appropriate time.

(Cllr Bowring and Cllr Crick re-joined the meeting, the time being 7:50pm)

F15 **General report of the Town Clerk**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Town Clerk in relation to the above. Members understood the reason for the request and the issues raised for council such as Abingdon and Faringdon by providing services which were paid for by town council tax payers but which benefited residents from other parishes.

It was proposed by the Chairman, Cllr Mike Badcock and seconded by Cllr Dennis Garrett to decline to offer financial assistance to Faringdon Town Council, in relation to their weekly "Access All Areas Sessions".

Resolved that: no financial assistance would be awarded to Faringdon Town Council in relation to the above project.

F16 **Publicity**

None.

F17 **Dates of meetings for 2017/18**

The Committee noted the dates of the meetings for 2017-18:

- 3rd October 2017
- 19th December 2017
- 9th January 2018
- 27th March 2018

SECTION II (Excluding the public and the press)

F18 Exclusion of the public, including the press

It was moved by the Chairman of the Committee, Cllr Mike Badcock and
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.

F19 Property Matters

The committee received and considered the confidential report of the Town Clerk in relation to the above and agreed the delegations and recommendations contained therein. See the Confidential Appendix to these minutes.

F20 Events

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

Cllr Alice Badcock thanked the Mr Nigel Warner Town Clerk, Mr Steve Rich Head of Services, Mr Tim Badcock Works Team Supervisor and the works team staff for the additional work in relation to the security considerations for the recent Fun and Music in the Park event.

The committee noted the report

The meeting rose at 8:15 pm.