

Abingdon-on-Thames Town Council
Draft Minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee
on Wednesday 21st September 2016 at 7pm
in the Roysse Room, Guildhall, Abingdon-on-Thames.

Present

Cllr Michael Badcock Chairman
Cllr Dennis Garrett Vice-Chairman and Chairman of Guildhall Committee

Cllr Samantha Bowring
Cllr Jeanette Halliday Chairman of Planning, Highways & Consultations
Cllr Monica Lovatt Chairman of CH Museum Management Committee
Cllr Sandy Lovatt Chairman of Amenities & Recreation Committee
Cllr Jan Morter
Cllr David Pope
Cllr Andrew Todd Chairman of Community Services Committee

In Attendance

Cllr Margaret Crick
Cllr Brian Hedley
Cllr Vicky Jenkins

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

F100 **Apologies**

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Alice Badcock and Helen Pighills.

F101 **Declarations of interest**

None.

F102 **Minutes**

The Committee received and considered the minutes of the meetings of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 21st July 2016 and 9th August 2016.

Resolved: that the minutes of the meetings of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 21st July 2016 and 9th August 2016 be agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

F103 **Matters arising**

There were no matters arising.

F104 **Matters referred from other committees**

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

There was one grant application which was considered by the Committee. This application would usually have been considered by the Community Services Committee but the recent meeting of this committee had been cancelled due to a lack of other business. Instead the Chairman of the Community Services Committee, Cllr Andrew Todd, gave a verbal presentation of the application received.

The application was for a total amount of £337 to cover the costs of the launch event of a new initiative called Healthy Abingdon. A member asked the Chairman of the Community Services Committee if there is a standing order which restricts the award of grants to less than the amount being applied for. The Chairman explained that there is not a standing order which states this but it is the general policy of the Community Services Committee to make a contribution to costs other than covering the full amount.

It was **RESOLVED** to award a grant of £125. This amount would cover the hire of the venue.

F105 **Policy Review Working Group**

The Committee received the notes of the meeting of the group held on 13th September 2016.

F106 **Financial Report**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Treasurer / RFO.

Regarding the list of the payments which had been made during August, a member noted that a payment to reclaim expenditure had been made to the Treasurer and asked whether there were any additional checks carried out when such payments are made. The Treasurer explained that any such payments are signed off by the Town Clerk, and vice versa for payments made to the Town Clerk. All cheques are signed by 2 members of the Finance and General Purposes Committee and also the Treasurer or Town Clerk.

A question was asked regarding electricity costs, in particular whether officers ensure the Council is benefitting from the best electricity deals available. The Treasurer explained that the Council make use of a utility broker each time a contract is due to expire. This is at no cost to the Council and ensures that the Council is able to benefit from the most preferential rates available to them.

A member asked the Treasurer whether the list of payments could include the cost centre and account code for each payment. The Treasurer explained that she did not believe this could be achieved easily as the payments listings is a report generated by the Cash Book module of the Omega Accounts system whereas the cost centre and account code information is held within the nominal ledger / management accounts modules. The Treasurer and Town Clerk agreed to contact the software supplier and ask if such a linked report is possible.

The Chairman of the Committee, Cllr Mike Badcock asked the Treasurer if there was anything within the Management Accounts which needs noting. The Treasurer confirmed that income and expenditure currently appears in line with budgets and there are no significant areas of overspend to note.

The Chairman, Cllr Mike Badcock reminded members they should raise any queries with the Treasurer in advance of the meeting to allow sufficient time for the query to be investigated.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

- (a) The schedule of accounts for the period 1st July 2016 to 31st August 2016 be approved.
- (b) The Management Accounts for the period 1st April 2016 to 16th September 2016 be approved.

F107 **Publicity**

There were no items of publicity to consider. The Chairman, Cllr Mike Badcock, stated that he had received several positive comments from members of the public regarding the flower displays and acknowledged the good work of the Outdoor Team looking after the flower beds.

F108 **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.

F109 **Confidential appendix**

The committee received and considered the draft confidential appendix to the minutes of the meetings of the Finance and General Purposes Committee of 21st July 2016 and 9th August 2016.

It was **RESOLVED** that: the draft confidential appendix of the meetings of 21st July 2016 and 9th August 2016 be approved as a correct record.

F110 **Matters arising**

Regarding item F95 in the minutes of the meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 21st July 2016, a member asked for an update on progress. See the confidential appendix.

F111 **Property Matters**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Town Clerk. The meeting was attended by Mrs Jane Bowen, of Museophile, who talked through her report. See the confidential Appendix for a record of the discussion which followed.

It was **RESOLVED** that: the report and recommendations contained therein be approved (see Confidential Appendix to these minutes).

Mrs Jane Bowen left the meeting, it being 8:15pm.

F112 **Matters referred from other Committees**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Assistant Town Clerk, in relation to the meeting of the Amenities and Recreation Committee held on 31st August 2016.

It was **RESOLVED** that: the report and recommendations contained therein be approved (see Confidential Appendix to these minutes).

F113 **Policy Review Working Group**

The Town Clerk advised that the confidential notes of the meeting held on 13th September 2016 would be circulated at a later date.

F114 **Staffing Matters**

The Committee received and considered the confidential report of the Town Clerk.

It was **RESOLVED** that: the report and recommendations contained therein be approved.

The meeting rose at 8:40 pm.

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