

Abingdon-on-Thames Town Council

Minutes of the Community Services Committee held on Tuesday 2nd June 2015 at 7.00 pm in the Roysse Court Meeting Room.

Present:

Cllr Andrew Todd	Chairman
Cllr Alice Badcock	Vice Chairman

Cllr Monica Lovatt
Cllr Pat Lonergan
Cllr Neil Fawcett
Cllr Angela Lawrence (arrival noted below)

In Attendance:

Cllr Michael Badcock	
Mr Nigel Warner	Town Clerk
Ms Heather Brown	Community Services Officer (Clerk to the meeting)

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Cllr Lorraine Oates. Cllr Angela Lawrence had also advised that she may be late as coming directly from a school governors' meeting.

2. Declarations of Interest

Cllrs Michael and Alice Badcock declared a non-pecuniary interest relating to Music in the Park in case the matter arose, as an in-law was in the band "the Prisoners of Katrina" but in the eventuality there was no discussion which would have required this declaration to be made.

3. Minutes and Matters Arising

As this was the first meeting of the committee there were no previous minutes to review. Matter arising from the publication of the agenda: Cllr

Alice Badcock asked that her title be *Vice-Chairman* rather than *Vice-Chair*.

4. Grants Applications

Grant applications from three community groups were put forward as follows and all were awarded the full amount of the grant requested.

Grants Applied for under the Community Grants Fund		
Name of Applicant	Reason for the grant application	Grant requested
1. Oxfordshire Play Association (b)	Community Play and Activity Day	£500
2. Friends of Abingdon (Heritage Open Days Group) (b)	Heritage Open Days in Abingdon	£700
3. Abingdon Naturalists Society (b)	Ongoing activities to care for Barton Fields	£400
Total requests for funds		£1600
Budget for year		£23 550
Total requests this meeting as a percentage of budget		6.8%

The above grants were 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.

A request was made that some thought be given to how best to promote the grants schemes and the Community Services Officer asked members

to look at the website pages and consider how they would like them changed as they had not had much attention in the recent past other than to update the factual content. A suggestion was made that pdfs with successful grant applicants' stories might inspire others to apply.

At this stage in the meeting Cllr A Lawrence arrived

5. Community Services

There was a short briefing from the Town Clerk relating to the remit and scope of the Community Services Committee based on the terms of reference adopted by the Town Council at the March 2015 meeting. The relevant section is reproduced below (in italics) for members' convenience.

COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE

Seven members

- (a) Dealing with all aspects of community engagement and communication, the Council's community events programme and information services generally, including the management and control of all related budgets;*
- (b) To consider the provision of community events of the widest possible appeal and accessibility, organised by the Council or in partnership with other organisations, and to establish an annual programme of such events;*
- (c) To manage and organise the Council's civic events programme with the proviso that any material changes or new dates being added in will be referred to the Finance and General Purposes Committee and the Town Council for decision, this including any proposals for a Bun-Throwing Ceremony;*
- (d) To be lead Committee for all aspects of the Council's Markets service/provision, including use of the Market Place;*
- (e) To organise the Council's annual summer events (Fun in the Park and Music in the Park);*
- (f) The consideration of financial grants to organisations through the Community Grants scheme.*

- (g) *To liaise with local voluntary organisations regarding the development of community services;*
- (h) *To consider initiatives to encourage tourism within the town;*
- (i) *The organisation of any civic/ Town Council-organised twinning activities;*
- (j) *Managing the production of Town Council publications including the publication of the Town Crier, the official Town Guide, other promotional material;*
- (k) *To consider an annual rolling publicity and communications plan every six-months;*
- (l) *The development, management and operation of the Council's website/portal, and*
- (m) *To make recommendations to the Finance and General Purposes Committee regarding staffing requirements relating to the staff primarily engaged undertaking the Committee's work.*

The Summer Events Sub-Committee had been previously appointed on 13th May 2015. The Chairman asked the committee to consider whether sub-committees were needed for the business relating to Grants and Communications or whether this business belonged in the Community Services Committee itself. It was noted that these sub-committees had only been set up in previous years because the Finance and General Purposes Committee had too many matters being referred to it, but with the transfer of these items of business to the Community Services Committee this problem might no longer exist. The Chairman noted that even detailed business items such as grant applications could be worked through swiftly in the main committee so long as all members read their papers in advance and then raised only important queries in the meeting.

It was resolved (*Prop. Cllr A Badcock; 2nd Cllr P Lonergan; nem. con.*) that no further sub-committees would be set up at this time and that for a trial period at least the main committee would take grant applications as the first item of business and communications matters as and when necessary. If any working groups become necessary to work through significant detail on any one project they will be set up with a view to being strictly time-limited, their purpose and necessity to be rechecked by the parent committee on a regular basis.

There was further discussion about some of the work areas and possible initiatives for the future. The Community Services Officer was requested to produce a report about markets for the committee to understand better

issues relating to markets, whether the council should take any action with regard to any of them, and how they fit into the economic life of the town. A member asked for detail on the start and finish times of the markets, and the rationale for these, as she believed that she may have come across an area that needed investigation and future discussion. Another member asked for some thought to be given to the feasibility of a Christmas Market.

The Community Services Officer also asked the committee to prepare to consider tourism publications as there were presently no plans to produce any leaflets or guides other than an update/reprint of the Town Guide which really targets residents. Frequent requests for publications are received from the Community and Visitor Information Centre staff who feel that, as the leaflets previously produced by the District Council are no longer in print, they do not have enough suitable material to give to visitors about the town. The Community Services Officer felt this should be passed on to the new committee to consider at a future meeting whether they wish to develop this area.

6. Summer Events

The notes from the last two meetings of the Summer Events Working Party were reviewed and a brief update was given.

7. Treasurer's Report

Councillors asked for further clarification of the budget codes for Summer Events. It was thought that once the event finances are resolved for this year, using the new set of codes, the budget lines will automatically become easier to follow.

8. Publicity Items

It was requested that in future for this committee the final agenda item could always be an opportunity for Councillors to suggest projects, events and achievements that the Community Services Team could be highlighting in their communications. The Community Services Officer asked Councillors to note that lead times on the "Round and About" pages which had been budgeted this year were around 6 weeks. Other items

could be publicised on the website at shorter notice provided they did not run contrary to the existing media policy.

The meeting rose at 8pm.