



Abingdon-on-Thames Town Council

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Community Committee

Tuesday 7 February 2023

Old Magistrates Court, 7pm

DRAFT MINUTES

Present:

Cllr Neil Fawcett
Cllr Pat Lonergan
Cllr Andy Foulsham
Cllr Samantha Bowring

Chair
Vice Chair
Mayor ex-officio
Chair of the Finance, Governance & Asset Management
Committee – ex-officio

In attendance:

Andy Crick
Victoria Moore
James Quartermain
Alan Rouse
Sue Wiper

Democratic Services Officer (clerk to the meeting)
Properties and Events Officer
Youth worker, Abingdon DAMASCUS
Town Clerk/Chief Executive
Abbey Cinema

SECTION I - open to the public including the Press

C84/22 Apologies

Apologies were received from Cllr Alex Greenaway.

Cllrs Briggs, Coveney and Jehanli were not present at the meeting.

C85/22 **Declarations of interest**

Cllr Bowring declared an interest re item C91/22 as she is a trustee of Abingdon Carousel, which has received grant funding from the town council and has applied for funding for 2023-4.

C86/22 **Statements and Questions from the Public**

Sue Wiper from the Abbey Cinema advised the meeting of a planned Summer event being organised by the Abbey Cinema and invited the town council to participate. Mrs Wiper also raised several issues in relation to the management of the Guildhall Historic Rooms and the Chair, Cllr Fawcett, advised her that these matters were not within the remit of this committee. Cllr Fawcett advised Mrs Wiper that the queries raised could be considered outside the meeting by the Town Clerk.

James Quartermain from Abingdon DAMASCUS introduced himself and offered to provide any updates on the work of the organisation and youth forum which may be needed.

C87/22 **Minutes**

It was **proposed** by Cllr Fawcett, **seconded** by Cllr Lonergan and **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting of the Community Committee of 6 December 2022 be signed by the Chair as a correct record.

C88/22 **Matters arising**

Re minute C76/22, the Chair was asked about the proposed meeting with the Chair of the Environment and Amenities Committee to consider which committee should address the climate change actions in the Market Place. The Chair advised that it had not been possible to arrange a meeting to date but this would be done.

C89/22 **Finance Report**

It was **proposed** by Cllr Fawcett, **seconded** by Cllr Lonergan and **RESOLVED** that the report of the Finance Officer was noted and this, including the management accounts for the period to 31 December 2022 be **APPROVED**.

C90/22 **Community grant applications**

Oxfordshire Play Association

A grant application from the Oxfordshire Play Association was considered and it was **proposed** by Cllr Fawcett, **seconded** by Cllr Foulsham and **RESOLVED** that the grant of £1,000 for the Oxfordshire Play Association be **APPROVED** as set out below. The grant applicant would be asked to provide evidence of further engagement activity with local groups which support the community, namely Abingdon Carousel and DAMASCUS, arising from the planned event.

Name of Applicant	Purpose of grant, as summarised in the grant application	Grant awarded
Oxfordshire Play Association (a)	Play and activity day in South Abingdon	A grant of £1,000 was awarded

The above grant was made in pursuance of the Council's powers, as noted in column one, as follows:

- (a) Local Government Act 1972, section 145: Provision of entertainments
- (b) Local Government Act 1972, section 137: Power of local authorities to incur expenditure for certain purposes not otherwise authorised.
- (c) Local Government and Rating Act 1997, part III, section 31: Crime prevention.
- (d) Local Government Act 1972, section 144: Power to encourage visitors and provide conference and other facilities.
- (e) Local Government Act 1972, section 142 (2A): Provision of information, etc., relating to matters affecting local government
- (f) Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976, section 19: Recreational facilities.
- (g) Local Government Act 1972, section 133: Provision of parish and community buildings.

ATOM Festival

The committee noted the award of a community grant to the ATOM Festival. ATOM had applied for a grant in December 2022 and members of the committee had agreed that the Town Clerk would have the authority to agree to this [application](#) as it was received between meetings.

Albert Memorial (Abingdon) Trust

The committee considered an application from the Albert Memorial (Abingdon) Trust for an additional grant from the funds held by the Town Council in relation to the Abingdon Joint Environmental Trust (JET) to support major repair work to the Albert Memorial. It was **proposed** by Cllr Fawcett, **seconded** by Cllr Foulsham and **RESOLVED** that the grant of £3,000 for the Albert Memorial (Abingdon) Trust be **APPROVED**.

The committee noted that the Joint Environmental Trust (JET) was a joint committee of the Vale of White Horse District Council and Abingdon Town Council. The JET came to an end in May 2011 following the decision by the district council to cease funding it. The remaining funds were transferred to the town council on condition that they were used for the same purposes as the JET had previously supported, 'to enable Abingdon Town Council to fund environmental improvement schemes which will enhance and sustain the vibrant market town.' The agreed funding was therefore conditionally awarded by the town council and the decision of the committee would need to be ratified by the district councillors representing Abingdon wards.

C91/22 Major grants

The committee considered major grant applications for 2023-4.

Major grant recipients will now be requested to complete an application form for each grant requested to accord with advice from the town council's auditor that there should be a clear audit trail for decisions on funding provided. This will be required of all grant recipients, including those who have received funding from the town council already.

Grant applications were received from DAMASCUS and The Abingdon Bridge (TAB) who requested funding of £12,500 for 2023-4.

It was **proposed** by Cllr Fawcett, **seconded** by Cllr Lonergan and **RESOLVED** that a grant of £12,500 for The Abingdon Bridge be **APPROVED**.

It was **proposed** by Cllr Fawcett, **seconded** by Cllr Lonergan and **RESOLVED** that a grant of £12,500 for Abingdon DAMASCUS be **APPROVED**.

Future process for large grant recipients

The Town Clerk would update the committee on the future process for considering grants for large grant recipients. The committee made some suggestions on this process:

- Review of previous spending to confirm that commitments had been met
- Consider future plans
- Grant recipients should be asked to report to the committee meeting in September and to submit a brief report to the annual parish meeting
- Grant recipients could be asked to report to the town council and provide reports for the quarterly Town Crier magazine

It was **proposed** by Cllr Fawcett, **seconded** by Cllr Lonergan and **RESOLVED** to ask officers to bring a recommendation to a future meeting on a process for grants large grant recipients based on a service level agreement approach and taking into account the suggestions from the committee.

It was **proposed** by Cllr Lonergan, **seconded** by Cllr Foulsham and **RESOLVED** to agree to provide half of the funding which had been included in the town council budget for 2023-24 to large grant recipients while a new process for managing major grants is developed.

C92/22 Events for the Coronation of King Charles III

The committee considered events for 2023.

Coronation bun throwing

A bun throwing event was proposed for Sunday 7 May 2023 at 5pm, with the event beginning at 4pm. Invitees to the bun throwing will be decided by the Town Clerk in consultation with the Mayor, with a recommendation to full council. Funding will be met from the Summer events budget. It was **proposed** by Cllr Fawcett, **seconded** by Cllr Lonergan and **RESOLVED** to ask the Town Clerk, Chair of the Community Committee and Properties and Events Officer to make a proposal to the next meeting of the town council.

The Mayor, Cllr Foulsham, noted that Churches in Abingdon are planning a civic service which is expected to take place on Friday 5 May.

Fun in the Park

It was **proposed** by Cllr Fawcett, **seconded** by Cllr Lonergan and **RESOLVED** that the town council would hold a 'Fun in the Park' event in Abbey Meadows on Sunday 6 May from 10am to 4pm.

C93/22 Summer events working party

The notes of the meeting of the working party, which met on [2 February 2023](#) were received.

The committee noted the invitation from the Abbey Cinema to participate in a summer event being organised by the cinema. The town council would be organising its own event but it was hoped that both events could be mutually promoted.

It was **proposed** by Cllr Fawcett, **seconded** by Cllr Lonergan and **RESOLVED** that the town council would hold a one day 'Music in the Park' event in Abbey Meadows in late Summer or early Autumn 2023.

C94/22 **Christmas Lights 2022**

The notes of the working party were received. The Outdoor Services Team were commended for their hard work in dealing with the lights and the committee minuted its thanks. It was suggested that the Town Clerk may consider some form of recognition for the team members for their efforts.

The committee considered whether the business community could be asked to support future light displays, as happens in other towns.

C95/22 **Communications strategy**

The Town Clerk updated the committee on the proposed communications strategy.

The existing communications and marketing strategy was approved by the Community Services Community in July 2021 and the Town Clerk considered that it needed to be reviewed. This would be done with a consultant experienced with working with town and parish councils, in consultation with committee members interested in participating in the work. The exercise would review how the town council's communications support its aims and objectives and how residents and visitors are communicated with. A report would be presented to a future meeting of the committee. The Town Clerk anticipated that the work would be undertaken in the next month and that it could be implemented by officers when completed, without the need for committee resolution.

It was **proposed** by Cllr Fawcett, **seconded** by Cllr Bowring and **RESOLVED** that the Town Clerk appoint a consultant to produce a communications strategy.

C96/22 **Museum report**

The committee received and considered the report from the Museum Manager and the appendix report from the Abingdon Museum Friends. The committee thanked museum staff for their work and the report was noted.

It was suggested that talks at the museum organised by the museum friends could be recorded and shared online for a wider audience.

C97/22 **Forward Plan**

The committee received and considered the forward plan. Officers were asked to include the Town Crier delivery schedule in the forward plan or actions register.

The forward plan was noted.

C98/22 **Actions Register**

The committee received and considered the actions register. It was noted that there were a number of outstanding actions with regard to noticeboards and the Chair would consult with officers and report to the next meeting of the committee to provide updates on these actions.

C99/22 **Future Agenda items**

The following items were noted for future agendas:

- Summer and Christmas events 2023
- Plan for future editions of the Town Crier
- Report on communications strategy
- Youth strategy
- Council events planning
- Event accessibility audit. It was noted that this covers events while a separate audit of accessibility for town council properties would need to be undertaken by the Finance, Governance and Asset Management Committee.
- Major grants process
- Platinum Jubilee review. The Chair noted that he was consulting with the Town Clerk on this item.

To consider and propose other items for future agendas.

C100.22 **Date of future meeting**

The date of the next scheduled meeting was noted:

- 23 May 2023

The meeting close at 8.55pm

Signed.....

Date.....