



Abingdon-on-Thames Town Council

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Community Committee

Tuesday 6 February 2024, 7pm

Old Magistrates Court

Draft minutes

These are draft minutes, subject to the approval of the committee and they may therefore change

Present:

Cllr Cheryl Briggs

Cllr Penny Clover

Cllr Neil Fawcett

Cllr Murali Gunarajah

Cllr Pat Lonergan

Cllr Lorraine Oates

Cllr Jim Halliday

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

In attendance:

Victoria Moore

Ron Spurs

Properties and Events Officer

Projects Officer (clerk to the meeting)

SECTION I - open to the public including the Press

C78/23 Apologies

Cllr Gwyneth Lewis, Cllr Victoria Walker

C79/23 Declarations of interest

Re item C33/23, Cllr Cheryl Briggs and Cllr Pat Lonergan are involved with the management of NEACA

C30/23 **Statements and Questions from the Public**

Hester Hand from the Friends of Abingdon Civic Society (the 'Friends') provided an update on the activities of the group and raised two questions. Ms Hand advised the town council of an agreement of a two-year lease to use the former H Samuel shop in Bury Street for a community space – 'Unit 24'. The Friends would be keen to discuss how this might complement the activities of the town council, including possible financial support from the town council for costs. A grant application was being considered.

2024 marks the 80th anniversary of the formation of the Friends which the group will seek to celebrate. The group is looking towards future activities and engaging with young people in Abingdon. The Friends asked whether the town council would be interested in a joint civic project or event which they were keen to discuss further.

The Friends are keen to contribute to the town council's planned communications review and asked if this was still under consideration by the working group.

The Friends asked about the use of noticeboards across Abingdon for local information and progress on new noticeboards.

The Chair, Cllr Fawcett, advised Ms Hand that the communications working group had not met but it would be interested in working with the Friends. Noticeboards would be considered as part of this process. Mr Spurs noted that he would be meeting with the Cemeteries and Outdoor Services Manager to discuss progress with the installation of new noticeboards and invited Ms Hand to participate.

The new community space was welcomed. Cllr Clover volunteered to work as the town council's liaison with the Friends on the new community space. The Friends were invited to submit an article for the Town Crier to publicise the new space.

C31/23 **Minutes**

It was **proposed** by Cllr Fawcett, **seconded** by Cllr Gunarajah and **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting of the Community Committee of 17 October 2023 be confirmed as an accurate record of the meeting, to be signed by the Chair.

It was **proposed** by Cllr Fawcett, **seconded** by Cllr Lonergan and **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting of the Community Committee of 28 November 2023 be confirmed as an accurate record of the meeting, to be signed by the Chair.

C32/23 **Management Accounts and Budget Setting**

It was **proposed** by Cllr Fawcett, **seconded** by Cllr Briggs and **RESOLVED** that the management accounts to 31 January 2024 be approved.

C33/23 Community grants

a. The committee **AGREED** the following grant applications:

Applicant	Purpose of grant	Grant request	Grant agreed	Proposed	Seconded
Abingdon Joint Schools Carnegie Trust (a)	Reading event	£550	£450	Cllr Halliday	Cllr Gunarajah
Abingdon Lawn Tennis Club (f)	New floodlights	£5,000	£1,000	Cllr Halliday	Cllr Gunarajah
ATOM Festival (a)	Science festival	£1,000	£1,000	Cllr Halliday	Cllr Gunarajah
North East Abingdon Community Association (NEACA) (g)	Refurbish floor	£2,300	£1,000	Cllr Halliday	Cllr Gunarajah
One Eighty (b)	Education support for disadvantaged children	£5,000	£935	Cllr Halliday	Cllr Gunarajah
Oxfordshire Play Association (a)	Play event	£1,000	£1,000	Cllr Halliday	Cllr Gunarajah

The above grants were 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.

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- b. The committed noted the information provided by previous grant recipients to demonstrate how the grants had been used:
- Our Lady's and St Edmunds flyer for Warm Spaces (grant awarded 28 November 2023, minute C71/23)
 - Oxfordshire Play Association report on 2023 South Abingdon Play and Activity Day (grant awarded 7 February 2023, minute C90/22)

C34/23 **Community grants**

The committee considered a report on an updated grants policy and related changes to the community grant application form part A and part B. It was **proposed** by Cllr Clover, **seconded** by Cllr Lonergan and **RESOLVED**:

- i. to confirm the updated grants policy;
- ii. to note that the original and updated grants policy requires that recipients of town council grants provide a written report on their activities within twelve months of the award date;
- iii. to approve new grant application forms for community grants;
- iv. to approve a new proforma to help grant recipients with their reporting requirements.

C35/23 **Report of the Museum Manager**

The committee considered a report on the work of the museum. The report was noted.

The committee noted the proposal regarding the possible future management of the Basement Museum at 4 East St. Helen Street, Abingdon, OX14 3EA and asked the Museum Manager if a guided tour could be arranged for councillors.

C36/23 **Michaelmas Fair**

The committee considered a report from the Properties and Events Officer on the proposed contract to run the Michaelmas Fair to 2034. A contract needed to be agreed in accordance with the Oxfordshire Act 1985.

It was **proposed** by Cllr Halliday, **seconded** by Cllr Clover and **RESOLVED** to agree to a new contract with Bob Wilson Fun Fairs Ltd for the period between 2024 and 2034 at a fee of £17,500 per annum plus a separate annual donation of £1,500, with a fair service on Sunday afternoon at 3pm, followed by the opening of the fair on Sunday evening immediately after the service, closing at 9pm, and with the usual operation of the fair on Monday and Tuesday.

C37/23 Events calendar

It was **proposed** by Cllr Fawcett, **seconded** by Cllr Oates and **RESOLVED** that the proposed events calendar for the period from March 2024 to April 2025 be adopted and that Fun and Music in the Park would be held on Saturday 7 September at Abbey Grounds. Officers were asked to prepare a briefing paper for councillors on the agreed event.

C38/23 Platinum Jubilee review

The committee considered a report on the event held in 2022. It was **proposed** by Cllr Fawcett, **seconded** by Cllr Lonergan and **RESOLVED** to receive the report.

C39/23 Public art working group

It was **proposed** by Cllr Halliday, **seconded** by Cllr Fawcett and **RESOLVED** to set up a working group to manage public art projects and report to this committee with the following terms of reference:

- the working party would consist of up to two members of the Community committee and up to two members of the Town Infrastructure committee plus a maximum of one other person to be appointed by full council;
- that the working party maintain a list of public art funds available from the district council and any conditions associated with each fund;
- that the working party presents to each meeting of the Town Infrastructure Committee recommendations of potential projects;
- for those projects endorsed by the committee, that the working party works with an officer to be appointed by the Town Clerk to create a detailed outline project plan with approximate costs, collaborations, duration and suggested start time.

The working party would have the following members:

Cllr Halliday – to represent the Community committee

Cllr Lonergan – Community committee

Cllr Sanderson – Town Infrastructure committee

Cllr Crick would be recommended to the town council as the additional member of the working party.

C40/23 To review the forward plan

The forward plan was reviewed.

C41/23 To review the actions register

The actions register was reviewed and updated.

C42/23 Future Agenda items

To review the following items for future agendas and to consider and propose other items for future agendas.

May 2024

- Report of communications working party
- Report on Fun and Music in the Park planning
- Report on Christmas lights

C43/23 Dates of future meetings

- a. The next scheduled meeting of the committee is 7 May 2024 and comprises the first meeting of this committee in the new council year. This meeting falls before the annual meeting which starts the council year and is therefore not lawful. The committee needed to consider an alternative date for the meeting in May 2024 and officers were asked to propose a new meeting date to the next town council.
- b. The dates for meetings in the council year 2024-25 were noted. A draft calendar of meetings will be submitted to the town council for approval on 20 March 2024.
 - 2 July 2024
 - 3 September 2024
 - 29 October 2024
 - 4 February 2025
 - 20 May 2025