

# **FARINGDON TOWN COUNCIL**

The Corn Exchange, FARINGDON, Oxfordshire, SN7 7JA

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Clerk: Sally Thurston



**Minutes of an Extra Recreation and Open Spaces Committee meeting held on Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> March at 6.30pm in the Jubilee Room, the Pump House, Faringdon.**

**PRESENT:** Cllrs. Jane Boulton (Chairman)  
David Barron  
Ian Bell  
Al Cane  
Andrew Marsden  
Mike Wise

**In Attendance:** Sally Thurston, Town Clerk  
Mel Lane and Roddy Benson, Sensory Garden Project

- 1/2/16 Apologies for Absence**  
Julie Farmer
- 2/2/16 Declarations of Interest**  
None
- 3/2/16 Minutes of Last Meeting: Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> January**  
The minutes were agreed as a correct record
- 4/2/16 Items for Information Only**  
None
- 5/2/16 Public Speaking Time**  
No members of the public were present.
- 6/2/16 Public Question Time**  
None
- 7/2/16 Sensory Garden**
- a) Members received a presentation from Mel Lane, Sensory Garden Project Manager. The presentation detailed plans for the garden and the many opportunities it could present to residents and in particular vulnerable groups. Members thought it was an excellent project but were concerned about future maintenance of the garden, café and toilets and any liability that would fall to the council. Mel Lane assured the council that there would be a revenue stream with various project and events that could be held to raise funds for maintenance. It was suggested that the Sensory Garden Project could lease the garden at a peppercorn rent from the council. It was also suggested that a buffer could be held in a bank account to protect the council

from unexpected costs. It was AGREED that these suggestions should be discussed further dependent on the out come of a possible planning application.

Members were also concerned about possible competition that a café may present to existing business. Mel informed councillors that she had consulted with local businesses and they did not view the café as competition as it was too far from the town centre. Root and Branch a local charity had shown an interest in operating the café to raise funds and to act as a gateway into work for some of their members.

Cllr. Marsden stated that the land was designated as a public open space in the terms of sale agreement with Oxfordshire County Council and suggested they should be consulted about the project. This was AGREED. The Clerk was asked to contact OCC.

Cllrs. Bell and Barron were nominated to representing the Recreation and Open Spaces committee on the Sensory Garden project committee. This was AGREED.

- b) Members considered submitting a planning application for the Sensory Garden to include a Café and a toilet. The Clerk explained that the R&OS Committee had not budgeted for this expenditure. Mel Lane stated that the Sensory Garden Project would pay for the cost of an application for change of use and the café and toilets.

It was PROPOSED that the Sensory Garden Project go ahead with a planning application. Further discussions could be held about the future operation and maintenance of the garden dependent on the outcome. This was SECONDED and CARRIED.