

FARINGDON TOWN COUNCIL

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Clerk: Sally Thurston



The Parish of Great Faringdon, in the County of Oxfordshire

**MINUTES OF A TOWN MEETING
HELD ON
MONDAY 18th JANUARY 2016 at 7.30 p.m
in the Corn Exchange, Faringdon**

PRESENT:

For Faringdon Town Council

Cllrs Mike Wise (Chair)
Pauline Beesley
Jane Boulton
Al Cane
Julie Farmer
Mark Greenwood
Steve Leniec
Andrew Marsden

Sally Thurston, Town Clerk
Rebekah Pugh, Deputy Town Clerk
Adele Vincent, Information Centre Supervisor and
Trainee Clerk
Liz Billson, Assistant Town Clerk
Billie Hayter, Information Assistant

14 Members of Public

District Councillor Roger Cox

1. Mayor's Opening Address

Cllr. Mike Wise thanked everyone for attending the meeting and sought permission from the meeting to allow Cllr. Steve Leniec to speak in his capacity as Chairman of the Finance Committee, although he lived outside the parish. This was **AGREED**.

Cllr. Wise gave an update which highlighted:

- Rebekah Pugh had been appointed Deputy Town Clerk

- Adele Vincent had been appointed Information Centre Supervisor and Trainee Clerk
- Phil Matson had been appointed Facilities Manager
- Karen Roberts had been appointed as Business Co-ordinator
- The Council's committee structure had been reorganised
- The Faringdon Town Council Tidy Team which was introduced in April 2016 as a result of, and increase to last year's precept, had been a great success and appreciated by residents. It would continue in 2017-18.
- Following a referendum on 24th November, which had resulted in a vote of 91% in favour of this action, the Faringdon Neighbourhood Plan was 'made' as part of the Local Plan on 12th December 2016 by the District Council.

2. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs. David Barron, Angela Finn and Kiera Bentley.

3. Minutes of the Town Meeting held on 10th April 2016

These were signed as a correct record.

4. Matters Arising

None

5. Town Council Budget and Precept for 2017/18

- a. The meeting received a presentation on the proposed budget for 2017-18 from Cllr. Steve Leniec, Chair of Faringdon Town Council Finance and Audit Committee. Cllr. Leniec informed the meeting that following cuts to the Children's Service by Oxfordshire County Council, the Town Council had been working as part of a community action group to save the Children's Centre. Cllr. Cane would supply further information later but the precept request included the equivalent of a full-time children's worker salary plus pension which represented the increase in the Band D cost. Cllr. Leniec informed the meeting that a precept figure of £360,160 had been proposed by the Finance and Audit committee which equated to a 3.1% rise to a band D household. The cost to a band D household would be £132.60 per annum; an increase of £3.96 per annum.
- b. A question was received regarding income for the venues. The meeting was informed that income for 2017-18 for the Corn Exchange was estimated at £30,500 and the Pump House was estimated at £2,500. This included room hire and office rentals.

A question was received regarding the £60,000 s106 monies from the development of Faringdon Park (formerly the 4&20 site) and how these would be spent. The meeting was informed that the money had been budgeted to mitigate the impact of the development on the Town Centre as per the s106 agreement. Copies of the planned expenditure were available from the Town Clerk and would shortly be published on the website.

A request was made that the budget proposal presentation used to demonstrate spending this evening be made available to the public. It was agreed that it would be posted on the Town Council website and that copies could be attained from the Town Clerk's office.

It was PROPOSED that a precept request of £360,160 be recommended to Full Council. This was AGREED.

6. Children's Centre

Cllr. Cane informed the meeting that following County Council cuts, the Faringdon Children's Centre was due to close at the end of March 2017. A community group comprising of representatives from Faringdon Town Council, Churches Together, the Children's Centre Steering Board and the Pump House Project had been working to try and save the centre. A three-year business plan had been produced which proposed that the Centre be relocated to the Pump House Project and named 'The Place'. The Centre would aim to provide a range of Universal Children's Services. A charity would be formed to run the centre and raise its running costs with a board comprising key stakeholders. The Town Council was proposing to allocate £16,650 per annum towards the salary costs in the 2017-18 budget. An application had been made to OCC for a transitional grant to cover the remaining £12,500. Running costs of approximately £13,800 per annum would be raised by the charity from fundraising and grants. £5,800 pledged funds had already been received. A grant had also been applied for from the Department of Communities and Local Government.

Cllr. Greenwood raised a concern that funds would need to be sourced beyond the three years and that the town needed to be aware that this was a commitment to raise the precept. A member of the public responded that the town had run the centre before OCC funding and could do so again.

7. Public Speaking Time and General Discussion

Questions and discussion followed which included:

- Shrivensham had introduced a 20-mph speed limit in their village. Could this be introduced in Faringdon? It was agreed that this should be raised at the Faringdon Area Traffic Advisory Committee.
- Was CCTV going to be introduced in Faringdon? Cllr. Wise explained that the council had no plans to do this as cost of maintaining and monitoring was prohibitive.
- The town had been top of surveys as a desirable place to live and raise a family. Could this be used more effectively to promote the town? D/Cllr. Cox explained that the Town Team did promote this. It was agreed that it could be used more widely.
- Would the coach stop at the new retail park be used effectively? It was hoped that the town could be promoted as a group travel destination. FTC and the Town Team were working together on this initiative. It was also hoped that long-distance coaches could use Faringdon Park as a coach stop.

- A newsletter had been distributed at the meeting; this was considered to be very informative and could it be distributed? Could this be implemented monthly?
The Town Clerk explained that it was planned to distribute the newsletter digitally, with hard copies available in the Information Centre and Library on a quarterly basis.
- Several questions and queries were raised regarding s106 contributions and Community Infrastructure Levy. It was agreed that all information available would be put on the Faringdon Town Council website as soon as possible.
- Concern was raised about the effect of the growing population on the health centre, particularly following the withdrawal of promised funding of £684,000. The meeting was informed that FTC had passed a motion to object to housing unless monies to improve the health infrastructure were included in any s106 funds. FTC had also written to the health centre asking for information and offering support. It was felt that a collective approach would help to protect the service.
- It was noted that in the minutes from the April meeting D/Cllr Cox was asked to provide a breakdown of costs involved in civil parking enforcement. Was this provided and was it available? The meeting was informed that D/Cllr. Cox had provided this information and that it was published on the Town Council website. It was agreed that the information would be attached to the minutes of this meeting and re-posted on the Town Council's website.

The meeting closed at 9.10pm