

**MINUTES OF THE FARINGDON JOINT ECONOMIC FORUM (JEF)  
MEETING HELD ON 14<sup>TH</sup> JULY 2011 AT 7:00PM IN THE OLD TOWN HALL,  
FARINGDON**

**1. Present:**

**Vale of White Horse District Council (VWHDC):** Cllr Roger Cox (Chairman), Cllr Robert Sharp, Cllr Alison Thomson and Cllr Mohinder Kainth.

**Faringdon Town Council (FTC):** Cllr Jane Boulton, Cllr Andrew Marsden, Cllr Julie Farmer and Cllr Jack Smith.

**Other organizations:** Eddie Williams (Folly Trust), Colin Desborough (FAR).

**Non-voting members:** Cllr Margaret Barker, Cllr Mike Wise (Mayor), Cllr Jim Halliday

**In attendance:** Trudy Godfrey, Secretary.

**2. Apologies for absence**

Chris Marriott, Daphne Saunders, Cllr Judith Heathcoat, Nick Elwell, Jane Haynes, Cllr Alan Hickmore and Sally Thurston.

**3. Declarations of interest**

None.

**4. Minutes of meeting on 14<sup>th</sup> April 2011**

The minutes of the meeting held on 14 April 2011 were accepted as true and accurate record.

**5. To discuss the Strategy and Action Plan for Faringdon and Wantage**

Trudy Godfrey advised that the Strategy and had been revised in line with comments received from the JEF and others and was now a working document. Projects currently under development included the inward investment fact-sheets to help businesses considering locating in Faringdon; the vacant commercial property database; the signage review. A tourism networking event was planned for 9<sup>th</sup> November with the theme: 'How to attract visitors, the media and funding.' An invitation would be sent to Faringdon JEF in due course. Trudy Godfrey thanked the JEF members for participating in the Shaping Faringdon event in February 2011 since many of the project ideas had stemmed from that event.

**6. Progress Reports from:**

**a. Focus on Faringdon SEEDA Funding and JEF projects**

- i. **Folly Tower.** Eddie Williams reported that the work to the Tower was now complete and the building was water-proof. They were re-pointing the upper portion of the tower at a cost of £5,000. The windows in Belvedere room needed work and they had a quote to do this work for £3,600. [Secretary's Note:

Following this meeting, the JEF were subsequently advised that the Folly Tower had received another £7,000 SEEDA funding to help with the costs of this work.] “The Sensible Folly” had been published by Paul Cornell and 200 copies had been sold at £2.50 each

- ii. **Skateboard Park.** Trudy Godfrey advised that SK8 had submitted full detailed planning permission and there had only been one objection. A planning decision was expected in mid August. The SK8 project manager was working on health and safety documentation and expected to get on-site for construction at the beginning of September. [Secretary’s Note: following this meeting, the JEF were subsequently advised that they had received another £6,000 SEEDA funding to help with landscaping costs.]
- iii. **Things to do around Faringdon maps.** Jane Haynes provided a written report advising that the Cycle and Walking Cards are progressing well. The content for the cards is being collated, and there are some routes that have been identified but need to be walked or cycled. It is planned that the cards will be available to view and purchase online and there will also be a route published The Advertiser magazine. This part of the communication sub-project will be completed well within time restrictions.
- iv. **52 things to do ... far from the madding beaches.** Trudy Godfrey advised that the 52 team had gone through all 500 contributions from members of the public and decided which entries best represent the Vale. Extra work had been commissioned, as well as liaising with local photographers and writing some articles ourselves. We now have a lovely ‘collection’ of written and artistic work that reflects life in the Vale and showcases some of the beautiful attractions here. Faringdon has done very well. The Folly Tower has a double page spread. All Saints, Farcycles (Faringdon – Coleshill – Buscot – Faringdon) and the Market Place article (to be written by Nick Elwell) will all feature in the book. Trudy Godfrey wrote an article about Badbury Clump - probably the best bluebell beauty spot in the world?

**b. Chamber of Commerce**

Cllr Julie Farmer suggested that the Chamber should extend their focus beyond retailers because there were many other businesses in Faringdon requiring support. Cllr Cox suggested that Paul Brame and Sarah Allen-Stevens should be invited to the JEF meetings, reflecting the change in Chamber representations.

**Action:** Cllr Margaret Barker to invite Paul Brame, Sarah Allen Stevens and Rachel Goddard to attend the JEF AGM in October.

**c. Faringdon Residents Association**

Colin Desborough advised that Faringdon Residents Association had been receiving more inquiries from young families wanting to move to Faringdon and asking to find out more about the social and ‘things to do’ in the town. Cllr Julie Farmer mentioned that a new web-site ‘where in Faringdon’ allows you to search for different shops and products.

**d. Pink Pigeons**

Mike Wise advised that the ‘24 blackbirds and a pie’ sculpture was now installed at the top of Folly Hill. The Pink Pigeons were working with Abigail Brown (the Vale’s arts development officer) to uncover locations for different works of art. One location was the telephonebox on Canada Lane and the Pink Pigeons had received four tenders from different artists to turn this telephonebox into a work of art. The preferred artist has been contacted and is expected to start work soon. The Berners Bizarre Walk by Peter Wentworth was going to do a tour of the town with a magic show at each location. The first tour would be on 17<sup>th</sup> July and was £5 a ticket. A number of ‘silly signs’ had been installed around the town and these have been sponsored by businesses.

**Action:** Abigail Brown to write press release promoting the work undertaken by Pink Pigeons and promote Faringdon as a location.

Cllr Jane Boulton advised that there had been complaints from residents of the Lees about the wall mural. Residents say they didn’t know it was happening and needed to be consulted about it.

**Action:** Trudy Godfrey to ask Abigail Brown about the wall mural. [Secretary’s Note: subsequent to the meeting, Abigail Brown advised that although residents had not been directly involved in the design of the mural, they had been sent a newsletter via the Police Community Support Officer (PCSO) and the mural was designed in response to residents requests for a mural.]

**e. Faringdon Twinning Association**

Mike Wise advised that 12 people from La Mele had come to Faringdon to celebrate the Royal Wedding. In June, 20 people from Faringdon cycled to La Mele in France. A youth visit was planned for 9<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup> July where 14 young people would be visiting Faringdon from La Mele.

**7. Economic Development News from Abingdon and Wantage**

Cllr Jim Halliday advised that he was involved in the Choose Abingdon Partnership Board. The Choose Abingdon Partnership Board had 3 tiers of government (Town, District and County) and the Chamber of Commerce and the Association of Abingdon Business Alliance. All partners contribute financially and ‘in kind’ to pay for the salary of a dedicated Choose Abingdon Partnership Manager and the projects that she delivers. Current projects being taken forward by the Choose Abingdon Partnership Manager included the loyalty card scheme and new town maps. Trudy Godfrey

advised that the number of card-holders (shoppers) who regularly use their Choose Abingdon card had now reached over 2,000. Evidence suggests that the average spend per customer is around 20% higher on average than for non card holders.

Wantage were going to launch a loyalty card scheme in September/October and there were over 20 businesses interested in joining the scheme. A grant of £3,600 had been obtained from Wantage JEF to help set up the scheme. Wantage were also benefiting from the BT Infinity programmed roll-out in the autumn to improve broadband provision.

**Action:** Cllr Mohinder Kainth to investigate whether and how to change Faringdon JEF into a Partnership.

#### **8. Financial Report of JEF**

Cllr Sharp advised that he had received £1,200 grant from the Vale. The current account had a credit balance of £2,613.52.

**Action:** Cllr Robert Sharp to draw down grant from Faringdon Town Council. Trudy Godfrey to raise a Purchase Order for this year's JEF grant of £1,200.

#### **9. Next Meeting**

The next meeting the AGM will be held at 7pm in the OTH on Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> October 2011.

*Trudy Godfrey*

Secretary

## **APPENDIX A**

### **JEF MEMBERSHIP 2010/11**

Voting members:

Vale of White Horse District Council (VWHDC):

- Cllr Roger Cox
- Cllr Mohinder Kainth
- Cllr Robert Sharp
- Cllr Ron Mansfield

Faringdon Town Council (FTC):

- Cllr Jane Boulton
- Cllr Julie Farmer
- Cllr Alan Hickmore
- Cllr Andrew Marsden
- Cllr Jack Smith

‘Other Organizations’:

- Paul Brame (Faringdon Chamber of Commerce)
- Sarah Allen-Stevens (Faringdon Chamber of Commerce)
- Colin Desborough (Faringdon Association of Residents)
- Daphne Saunders (Faringdon Area Project)
- Eddie Williams (Faringdon Folly Tower Trust)

Non-Voting members:

- Mayor of Faringdon (Cllr Mike Wise)
- Chairman of the Vale of White Horse District Council (Cllr Alison Thomson)
- County Councillor for the Faringdon Division (Cllr Judith Heathcoat)

Co-opted members (non-voting, not more than four persons):

- Alison Moore (Women’s Institute)
- Tim Evans (Chair of Faringdon Twinning)
- Sjeourd Vogt (Pink Pigeons)

Observer (non-voting):

- Cllr Elaine Ware (VWHDC)

In attendance (non-voting):

- Toby Warren (VWHDC officer)
- Sally Thurston (FTC officer)
- Trudy Godfrey (VWHDC officer and minutes secretary)