

MINUTES OF THE FARINGDON JOINT ECONOMIC FORUM (JEF)
MEETING HELD ON 17 July 2014 AT 7:00PM IN THE OLD TOWN HALL,
FARINGDON

1. Present:

Vale of White Horse District Council (VWHDC): Cllr Mohinder Kainth (chairman), Cllr Robert Sharp, Cllr Roger Cox, Cllr Jim Halliday, Cllr Alison Thomson.

Faringdon Town Council (FTC): Cllr Andrew Marsden, Cllr Mark Greenwood.

Other organizations: Eddie Williams (Folly Trust), , Mrs Daphne Saunders (FAP), Sarah Allen Stevens (Chamber of Commerce), Mark Harrison (Farcycles), Gavin Hopkins (Farcycles).

In attendance: Trudy Godfrey (economic development team leader and minutes Secretary), Bethia Thomas (Faringdon Market Town Co-ordinator), Andy Hayter (Faringdon Market Town Co-ordinator).

Apologies: Cllr Alison Thomson, Cllr Jane Boulton, Paul Brame (Chamber of Commerce), David Williamson (Farcycles), Cllr Judith Heathcoat (OCC),

2. Declarations of interest and Matters Arising

Cllr Mark Greenwood declared a business and pecuniary interest in that his company manufactured the signage that Farcycles were using for their Folly Fest Sportive Cycling event in August 2014.

Matters arising:

- AM to speak to Town Council Finance Committee to request £500 contribution towards JEF for 2013/14 and for £500 contribution towards JEF for 2014/15, as per the constitution.
- AH to discuss with Marriotts the position with the old Folly Coffee Shop, Faringdon and also old Video and gaming store to see if they are receptive to 'meanwhile uses' such as pop-up shops
- BT to ask for a copy of the Faringdon Flag from Karen Vogt.
- Cllr Robert Sharp to pay Faringdon Folly Tower Trustees up to £600 in respect of Folly Tower leaflets
- BT to find out whether the Faringdon in Bloom competition is being organized for August 2014.
- AH to formally ask FTC if there was an storage capacity in either the Pump Rooms or the Old Town Hall to store the market stalls.
- Cllr Judith Heathcoat to liaise with OCC officers and Faringdon town clerk to help Farcycles access the Better Routes to School funding to upgrade cycling infrastructure.

- BT to develop a product brand for Faringdon, perhaps in conjunction with the Pink Pigeons, and work with town centre retailers and possibly the TIC to increase the range of local products in town.

3. Minutes of meeting on 24 January 2014

Two amendments made. Frank Paby should read “Pavy” and secretary to update the Town Council membership (Appendix A).

4. Financial Report of JEF

Cllr Sharp advised the current balance was £3,364.64 (including a £1,000 contribution from the Vale) but grants of £602 and £289 were to be paid to Faringdon Folly Tower Trust and Farcycles respectively. Contributions from the Town Council of £500 for last financial year and £500 for the current financial year were expected. **Action: AM to ask Town Council for £500 contribution towards JEF expenses for both last financial year and 2014/15**

5. Update from the Vale

Trudy Godfrey advised that Bethia Thomas and Andy Hayter had a successful first quarter, and a number of projects in the Action Plan for Faringdon had been delivered or were on track for future delivery. The Action plan Quarter 1 update is appended. The Faringdon free Wi Fi project had been delivered, and people visiting the town centre could now browse the internet. Any town centre businesses who wanted to access broadband services were encouraged to get in touch with Alan Rogers from STL Communications who were based in Witney on ARogers@stlcomms.com. The Bybox delivery lockers were now available for use for people who wanted secure storage for their on-line deliveries. Residents are encouraged to sign up to myByBox at www.mybybox.com. With a trial period of £2.00 for 5 deliveries, the Bybox offers great convenience at low cost. During sign up you choose the locker closest to you – there are lockers in Wantage, Faringdon, Botley, Abingdon, Didcot and Wallingford. All the money is donated to charity. When placing an online order simply use the address and secret code assigned to you at sign up for the delivery address and ByBox will forward on your parcel to your locker. When the item is delivered to the locker ByBox will send you a text and an email with a security code which is used to collect the parcel. Residents who have already used the locker agree that finding a ‘Sorry we missed you card’ instead of the expected parcel is annoying and using ByBox is a “convenient and easy to use” alternative to waiting in.

6. Update reports from:-

- a. **Chamber of Commerce:** Sarah Allen Stevens advised the Chamber had been supporting the loyalty card and Independents Day. They had received a draft economic development strategy from consultants and

were holding a steering group meeting to discuss the draft on 21 July. A final report was expected by the end of July. Sarah envisaged there would be a number of actions to be taken forward in terms of marketing the town and commercial opportunities. Sarah advised she had been approached by a community bank and this was discussed by JEF members but agreed that given there was a Lloyds branch in the town it was unwise to pursue this opportunity at the current time.

- b. **Faringdon Residents Association:** no update. EW to make contact with Colin Desborough to find out if he would like to return to the group. TG to invite a member of Folly View Residents Association to the AGM.
- c. **Faringdon Farcycles:** Gavin Hopkins and Mark Harrison (Farcycles) advised the Farcycles Folly Fest sportif would be held in August. There were 35 mile, 70 mile and 111 mile routes with catering. People come from all over the country to participate in the rides. Farcycles will be trying to get access to the s106 monies (we believe £30k) that were earmarked for 'Better Ways to School' which could be used to fund safe cycling routes for children in the town. **Action: Cllr Judith Heathcoat to progress access to Better Routes to School funding.**
- d. **Pink Pigeons:** Eddie Williams advised more plaques would soon be “discovered” on a wall near you – the Pink Pigeons trail was developing. Work on the Portwell bench had started and BT was going to build a ‘community day’ around it. The divers image was being made in the workshop. Photos of the construction of the diver’s head was going onto www.faringdon.org. Pink Pigeons were developing a flag to represent the town – possibly a Faringdon coat of arms and Karen Vogt had designed a draft. **Action: BT to ask for a copy of the Faringdon Flag from Karen Vogt.**
- e. **Faringdon in Bloom:** no report. BT to find out if Faringdon in Bloom was planned for 2014
- f. **Folly Tower Trust:** Eddie Williams advised that the Tower continued to attract high levels of visitors . He advised that the money provided via the OCC communities fund by Cllr Judith Heathcoat was used to pay for a survey of te woodland area. Initial advice was there was thought to have been an Iron Age settlement on the hill with evidence of large, medium and small dwellings on the hill. The survey still had another month to complete then the archeologists would provide the Folly Tower Trust with an image of what the hill would have looked like.
- g. **Faringdon Town Council update:** Andrew Marsden advised the Neighbourhood Plan had been submitted to the Vale for their consideration and there would then be a further 6 week formal consultation period. It would be sent to the Examiner and out to Referendum at the beginning of 2015. It would be in effect by Easter 2015. The Town Council had also commissioned a car parking survey – to be carried out by consultant Gary Smith, and the surveys would commence in September 2014. The Town Council had also contributed £4,000 towards the economic development strategy being taken forward

by the Chamber and they were looking to purchase the land on Highworth Road that would be used for community facilities (not just the Youth Centre as currently provided). AH asked if the Town Council had any room to store market stalls. **Action:** AH to formally ask FTC if there was an storage capacity in either the Pump Rooms or the Old Town Hall to store the market stalls.

- h. **Faringdon Area Project:** Daphne advised that she had recently visited Prince Charles Farm Shop and was impressed with the wide range of local branded products available. This was discussed by the JEF and it was suggested that BT develop a brand for Faringdon, perhaps in conjunction with the Pink Pigeons, and work with town centre retailers and possibly the TIC to increase the range of local products in town.

10. **Next meeting dates.** Dates of the next meeting is:

- **Thursday 16 October 2014 (AGM)**

All meetings will be held in the Old Town Hall at 7pm.

Trudy Godfrey

Secretary

APPENDIX A
JEF MEMBERSHIP 2014/15

Voting members:

Vale of White Horse District Council (VWHDC):

- Cllr Roger Cox
- Cllr Mohinder Kainth
- Cllr Robert Sharp
- Cllr Alison Thomson
- Cllr Jim Halliday

Faringdon Town Council (FTC):

- Cllr Jane Boulton
- Cllr Andrew Marsden
- Cllr James Gregory
- Cllr Ian Bell
- Cllr Mark Greenwood

‘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 David Price)
- County Councillor for the Faringdon Division (Cllr Judith Heathcoat)

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

- Alison Moore (Women’s Institute)
- David Williamson (Chair of Faringdon Twinning)
- Sjoerd Vogt (Pink Pigeons)

Observer (non-voting):

- Cllr Elaine Ware (VWHDC)

In attendance (non-voting):

- Trudy Godfrey (VWHDC officer and minutes secretary)

APPENDIX

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