

# Faringdon Joint Economic Forum - Draft

## MINUTES OF THE FARINGDON JOINT ECONOMIC FORUM (JEF) MEETING HELD ON 15<sup>TH</sup> APRIL 2010 AT 7PM IN THE OLD TOWN HALL, FARINGDON

### 1. Present:

**Vale of White Horse District Council (VWHDC):** Cllr Alison Thomson (voting), Cllr Roger Cox (voting), Cllr Sharp (voting – VWHDC)

**Faringdon Town Council (FTC):** Andrew Marsden (voting)

**'Other Organisations'** : Nick Elwell, JEF Chairman (voting), Colin Desborough (voting)

**Co-opted Members:** Eddie Williams (non-voting - Faringdon Folly Tower Trust)

**Observer:** Richard Webber (non voting - VWHDC)

**In attendance:** Trudy Godfrey (non-voting)

### 2. Apologies for Absence

Jim Halliday (voting), Christopher Marriott (voting) Julie Farmer (voting), Tim Evans (non-voting), Daphne Saunders (voting), Sally Thurston (non-voting), Kevin Herbert (voting), Margaret Barker (voting), Cllr Matthew Barber (voting)

### 3. Declaration of interest

Nick Elwell declared a personal interest (non prejudicial) because he was also Chair of the Faringdon Arts Festival.

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## 4. Minutes of the meeting on 14<sup>th</sup> January 2010

All agreed the draft minutes provided an accurate record of the meeting. Trudy Godfrey was asked to clarify the position in respect of Town and District Council maintenance and insurance liabilities concerning Faringdon Skate Park.

TG to ask Ian Matten about ongoing insurance and maintenance liabilities.

## 5. Oxfordshire Market Towns Funding

The Chairman reported that the Oxfordshire Market Towns Network (OMTN) application was progressing well. We expected to submit the application in April with a likely visit from an appraiser in May.

Eddie Williams advised that the Folly Tower had difficulties in finding match funding (£23,000) for the Market Towns and Leader programme to allow it to finance essential repairs to the electrics and roof. The Folly Tower project had until the end of August to secure match funding, otherwise there was a risk that the Market Towns funding would be withdrawn. Alison Thomson proposed that we should apply to the Vale of White Horse District Council and Faringdon Town Council asking them for a financial contribution towards the Folly Tower project. Councillor Webber explained that although this was a very difficult year – financially speaking – in the District Council, the Folly Tower was clearly an iconic monument and Faringdon's most visible attraction.

EW to email Cllr Webber to ask Vale Executive for a contribution towards Folly Tower.

## 6. Progress Report on Faringdon Area Project (FAP)

Nick Elwell reported that The FAP's AGM and eco-week after-party on 30<sup>th</sup> March was a great success attracting dozens of volunteers and well-wishers. The medical group was also successful in lobbying the Oxfordshire Primary Care Trust for additional resources. FAP need £500 match funding for catering costs associated with hosting the Action for Market Towns event on 6<sup>th</sup> July. Cllr Cox proposed that JEF provide £500 match-funding for the Action for Market Towns Convention. This was seconded by Cllr Thomson. The Forum agreed unanimously.

Cllr Sharp to pay £500 match funding for catering for the AMT convention.

## 7. Chamber of Commerce

Nick Elwell advised that the Chamber of Commerce are doing some analysis on car parking revenues within the Vale to see whether the costs of raising car parking revenues justify the financial gains. They are also exploring whether the potential loss in car parking revenue from one hour free car parking within Faringdon could be offset by retailer contributions.

## 8. Focus on Faringdon

Nick explained that Focus on Faringdon had published the new Focus on Faringdon 2010 and Focus on Wantage 2010 magazines. They were exploring the possibility of producing similar Guides for other towns in

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Oxfordshire.

## 9. Faringdon Farcycles

Nick Elwell explained that Faringdon Farcycles had been working on developing a cycling route linking Faringdon to other villages, with a particular focus on improving the route to Shellingford.

## 10. Faringdon Arts Festival with a tint of Lord Berners 4<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup> July

Nick Elwell advised that the programme was available in draft. Music events were scheduled for Friday, Saturday and Sunday. A larger Farmers market was scheduled for Tuesday. There would also be a play celebrating the life of Lord Berners in Budgens. It was hoped that this play would attract some big stars (Kevin Spacey was mentioned!). Nick was exploring obtaining access to Faringdon House to view Lord Berners paintings. Cllr Cox proposed that JEF allocate £1,000 funding to support the Arts Festival. This was seconded by Cllr Thomson. The Forum agreed unanimously. Cllr Webber suggested that the JEF should approach Abigail Brown (Arts Officer at the Vale) to explore other funding avenues.

**TG** to speak to Abi Brown about funding for Arts Festival.

A further £1,000 might be made available if additional funds are necessary to assist cover expenditure

**TG** to ask John Backley (Car Parks Manager) about free car parking on 6<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> July.

The group also inquired whether the Vale would be able to provide free car parking to support the Arts Festival on Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> (Farmers Market) and Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> July.

## 13. Craft Fair

Cllr Thomson advised that Faringdon Craft Fair continued ongoing popularity with visitors and residents. Lots of stall holders had booked spaces for the Autumn. They were 100% self funded (after initial assistance with start-up costs).

## 14. Economic Development News from Abingdon and Wantage

Trudy Godfrey reported on economic development news from Abingdon and Wantage. She advised that the SEEDA appraiser was scheduled to visit Wantage on 26<sup>th</sup> April in connection with the application for funding from the Small Rural Towns Programme. If successful, Wantage and Grove would receive £98,000 to help deliver four projects:

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- A shop front improvement grant scheme
- Improvements to the Market Place
- Diversity and remediation works to Letcombe Brook to enable it to operate as a visitor attraction
- Walking & cycling route cards

Projects in Abingdon being undertaken by the Choose Abingdon Partnership included:

- Spring Crafts Festival – musical entertainment and street performers helped to draw large numbers of people into the town.
- Communication and Promotion Town Events – an existing community project to provide an Abingdon diary on the web is being assisted to publish a series of 'What's On' leaflets.
- Savvy Loyalty Card scheme (being investigated for market towns across the Vale)

## 16. Next Meeting

TG to book Old  
Town Hall 15/7

The date of the next meeting was arranged for Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> July at 7pm.

The meeting rose at 8.40pm

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## MEMBERSHIP 2009/10

### Voting members:

#### Vale of White Horse District Council (VWHDC):

- Cllr Alison Thomson
- Cllr Roger Cox
- Cllr Matthew Barber
- Cllr Robert Sharp
- Cllr Jim Halliday

#### Faringdon Town Council (FTC):

- Cllr Margaret Barker
- Cllr Andrew Marsden
- Cllr Jane Boulton
- Cllr Kevin Herbert
- Cllr John Gillman

#### 'Other Organisations' :

- Nick Elwell (Faringdon Chamber of Commerce)
- Christopher Marriott (Faringdon Chamber of Commerce)
- Colin Desborough (Faringdon Association of Residents)
- Daphne Saunders (Faringdon Area Project)
- Julie Farmer (South Faringdon Residents Association [Southampton Street Association of Residents])

### Non-Voting members:

- Mayor of Faringdon (Cllr Mike Wise)
- Chairman of the Vale of White Horse District Council (Cllr Alison Rooke)
- 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)
- Eddie Williams (Faringdon Folly Tower Trust)

### Observer (non-voting):

- Cllr Richard Webber (VWHDC)

### In attendance (non-voting):

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