

FARINGDON TOWN COUNCIL

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Clerk: Sally Thurston



**The Parish of Great Faringdon in the County of Oxfordshire
Minutes of the ANNUAL TOWN MEETING
held in the Corn Exchange, Faringdon SN7 7JA
on Wednesday 18th May 2022 at 7.00pm**

In Attendance:

Town Councillors:

Kiera Bentley (Town Mayor)
Jane Boulton
Rosalind Burns
Peter Castle
Angela Finn
Lucy Martin
Kimberly Morgan
Stephen Smith
Liz Swallow
Gene Webb
Mike Wise

Staff Present:

Sally Thurston – Town Clerk
Margaret Nairne – Town Clerk's Assistant
Liza Whitney – Marketing & Community Officer
Adele Vincent – Activities Officer

43 members of the public

1. Community Award Presentations

The Following awards were presented by Town Mayor Cllr. Bentley:

Recognition of outstanding service to the Community

Mairead Boyce

Roddy Benson

Clive Davis Community Hero Award

Peter King

Group Award - Pump House Project

Community Volunteer Award

COVID Vaccination Centre Volunteers

Community Environmental Champion

Katie-Louise Herring - Tribe Zero Waste

Community Business Award - Sadlers

Congratulations and thanks were given to all the winners and to all those nominated.

2. Mayor's Opening Address

Cllr. Bentley welcomed everyone to the meeting. Cllr Bentley gave an address which included:

- Activities and events throughout the year
- Reference to the Council's achievements
- Nominating The Folly Trust as the Mayor's charity for the year.

3. Apologies for Absence

Cllr Leniec

Cllr Smith

District Cllr David Grant

County and District Cllr Bethia Thomas

4. Minutes of the Town Meeting held on Wednesday 5th May 2021.

The minutes were signed as a correct record.

5. Matters Arising

None

6. Reports

The following reports were received and NOTED. (Available in appendix 1)

1. Reports from Town Council Committees were RECEIVED

- Town Council Committees Finance and Audit – Cllr Finn
- Planning and Highways – Cllr Boulton

The following were raised and discussed:

- The bridge from the new estate to the retail park and a crossing point for which discussions continue with landowners.
- Seemingly continuous traffic lights on Park Road mitigated by new wider pavement to allow for walking and cycling being created by developers.
- Problems with civil parking enforcement, one consequence being cars now parked further out and causing problems for other residents.

c. Facilities – Cllr Burns

d. Community and Partnerships – Cllr Castle

e. Working parties:

- Climate Change Working Party – Cllr Swallow
- Town Centre Regeneration Working Party – Cllr Burns

f. Chair's activities – Cllr Bentley

2. Reports from

- Tucker's Recreation Ground Trust – Cllr Morgan
- Faringdon War Memorial Trust – Cllr Martin

3. County Councillor's Report

4. District Councillors' Report

5. Reports from Local Organisations

- a. Twinning Association: David Williams updated the meeting regarding current activities with Le Mele in France
- b. Farcycles: David Williams updated the meeting regarding a whole variety of activities aimed at enabling and encouraging cycling to thrive in our community. They are always keen to find more volunteers to help.
- c. Faringdon Fire Station
- d. Public Access Defibrillator Committee
- e. The Pump House
- f. Community Bus: Cllr Burns updated the meeting on the Community Bus highlighting the need for more volunteer drivers.

6. Reports from grant recipients

- a. Be Free Young Carers
- b. Faringdon Community College Duke of Edinburgh Award
- c. Maymessy
- d. OPA Playday
- e. Faringdon Rugby Club: a member thanked the Town Council for the grant towards floodlights which have been a fantastic improvement and have enabled the club successfully to expand in various ways.
- f. Root and Branch
- g. Vale Community Impact: Christine Walter, a Town Councillor from Wantage, reported from Vale Community Impact, thanking the Town Council for their grant which helps them to continue their work of providing advice, transport and a good neighbour scheme. They have helped people in Faringdon 881 times.
- h. Pump House Project COGS youth funding
- i. Folly Trust: Eddie Williams thanked the Town Council for their support and spoke briefly about the plans for refurbishment work required to the tower, which is scheduled for next year, plus outlining the budget required.

7. **Climate Change**

The meeting discussed Climate Change initiatives including:

- a) Co-Wheels – Cllr Castle explained the proposed car-share scheme which the Town Council are considering for Faringdon. The current proposal is for 2 cars which would be provided and maintained by Co-Wheels for an initial 3 years. The suggestion is that the set-up cost money (£19,500 + VAT per vehicle) would come from CIL funds. Members of the public discussed the initiative and raised the following:
 - Need clarity on the remit of the Town Council to be considering this project as opposed to directing the spending elsewhere, specifically in light of the rising cost of living subsequent to the current energy crisis and inflation
 - Market research should be done
 - The future is car-sharing and it is vital step as we move forward to cut the carbon cord in our lives
 - In Henley people have given up their cars, particularly second cars, as a result of Co-Wheels in the town
 - The cars should be electric cars and could possibly be kept in the Southampton Street or Gloucester Street car parks

- Faringdon needs to have a large enough population to justify the cars
 - Good for people who have no car and cheaper than running your own car
- b) Green Day Event: Cllr Swallow outlined this event on 1/10/22 from 10am-1pm in the Corn Exchange. Local businesses and interested parties are invited to take stalls and there will be collaboration with local groups and schools. There will also be a vegan café.
- c) Plastic Free Community Status: Cllr Swallow outlined the scope of this initiative which is run by 'Surfers against Sewage'. Signing up for the campaign will help us acknowledge the climate crisis as well as encouraging people to kick their addiction to single-use plastic. Cllr Morgan also mentioned the new Pink Pigeon recycling bin which is going to be placed in the Southampton Street car park.

8. Parking in Faringdon

The meeting discussed parking in the town, the implementation of civil parking enforcement and possible residents' parking. Members of the public discussed these and raised the following:

- Civil Enforcement is underway. Problem continues as people continue to park illegally, particularly on London Street, when there is no enforcement going on. Noted that parking is individual's responsibility and residents and visitors should park legally and then walk
- The Town Council could try and engage more with the Police and could campaign to the Police Commissioner
- Suggestion to create a 15-minute zone as part of the community infrastructure
- Part of a solution could be the walking and cycling interactive route plan being put together - with the intention of making it more likely that people will not use their cars
- Residents' parking could ensure that those who do have off-street parking use it, but would involve a charge to those signing up for it
- Suggestion of parking discs in central area of town which can be very effective by recording arrival time and therefore length of parking time in one spot.

9. United Nations Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons

Following a motion brought forward to the Town Council by Cllr Burns, Cllr Bentley proposed that the Town Meeting consider whether to support the motion. Sheets were handed out showing the wording of the motion and Members of the public discussed the proposal and a discussion followed including the following:

- There is no 'Planet B' and countries such as North Korea continue to develop nuclear weapons while Russia makes powerful threats
- Concern over USA having bases in the UK which may store nuclear weapons over which we have no control
- Cllr Castle spoke against the motion as inappropriate at this particular time with the war in Ukraine as would not send the right message to Moscow
- Others asked 'why wait?' as there is never a good time
- Clarification that support of this treaty is different to pacifism

- Noted that treaties against the use of cluster bombs and nitric acid hasn't stopped their illegal use. With nuclear fission the 'genie was out of the bottle' and Faringdon Town Council supporting the UN Treaty will not make any difference in the world
- Question raised as to whether this should go out to a wider meeting and further consultation
- The Town Council were voted in to make decisions on behalf of the town; the majority of UN countries have voted to support the treaty (as have the Church of England) although the UK has not yet done so. Supporting this motion would show where Faringdon town stands on the issue

A vote took place on the proposal that Faringdon Town Council should declare its support for the United Nations Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons and the motion was carried. For: 16 Against: 5 Abstentions: 3

10. Street Cleanliness

The meeting listened to a report from Cllr Webb who, whilst acknowledging that street cleanliness is the responsibility of BIFFA (under the direction of the District Council) who do regularly visit the town, presented details on recent efforts further to clean up and weed the pavements and corners around the centre of town. Cllr Webb has a group of volunteers who help with this and would encourage more to join in.

11. Public Speaking Time and General Discussion

A member of the public praised the Town Council for supporting the shops in the town centre but raised issue of need for more support for businesses that work from home, particularly after being driven to work from home during the pandemic, or e.g. in Faringdon Business Centre. There will be an open day at Faringdon Business Centre on 22nd June from 6.30-9.30pm.

Meeting ended at 9.15pm