

FARINGDON TOWN COUNCIL

The Pump House, 5 Market Place, FARINGDON, Oxfordshire, SN7 7HL

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Clerk: Sally Thurston



**The Parish of Great Faringdon in the County of Oxfordshire
Minutes of a TOWN MEETING to discuss budget
held in the Jubilee Room, The Pump House, Market Place, Faringdon SN7 7HL
on Monday 6th November 2023 at 7.30pm**

In Attendance:

Town Councillors:

Peter Castle (Chair)
Jane Boulton
Julie Farmer
Alan Ford
Steve Leniec
Rufus Lunn
Chris Palmer
Gene Webb
Mark Wild
Mike Wise
Kimberly Morgan (online)

Staff Present:

Sally Thurston – Town Clerk
Margaret Nairne – Town Clerk's Assistant
Sarah Johnson – Facilities and Services Manager (online)
9 members of the public

1. Mayor's Opening Address

Cllr. Wise PROPOSED that Cllr. Steve Leniec, a resident of Eaton Hastings, be invited to join the meeting as Town Councillor/Chairman of the Finance and Audit Committee, this was AGREED.

Cllr. Castle welcomed everyone to the meeting and gave an address briefly covering the strategic objectives for the town including:

- Improve engagement with residents
- Support for local businesses
- The local environment to include efforts to connect and integrate new areas of the town
- Address the shortage of amenity space
- Continue pushing the climate change agenda
- Use CIL funding to help mitigate the increased population
- Continue to help local initiatives with grant funding
- Short-term objectives to create a MUGA, increase amenity space, to consolidate a cycling and walking infrastructure plan

2. Apologies for Absence

Cllr. Finn, Cllr. Morgan, Cllr. Norris, C.Cllr & D.Cllr. Thomas.

3. Minutes of the Town Meeting held on 31st May 2023.

The minutes were signed as a correct record.

4. Matters Arising

None

5. Town Businesses

The town meeting considered matters concerning businesses based in Faringdon and received suggestions from businesses on how Faringdon Town Council can support economic stability and growth in the town.

Representatives from local businesses based in Faringdon spoke about the difficulties around parking and the presence of buses in the town centre, and the potential negative effects these can have on their customers and clients.

Parking:

- There were suggestions for changes to the Traffic Orders e.g. removing market day restrictions at the top end of the Market Place and increase parking time in the Market Place from 30 minutes to 1 hour.
- Suggestions to set up system of residential and business parking permits to enable local people and business owners to park in nearby streets, noting that residents in Church Street had complained and asked that all-day parking should be restricted
- Cllr. Morgan pointed out that it is not illegal to park for a short time to load and unload and cars can then park in the local car parks.
- Cllr. Wise pointed out that Faringdon has a total of 133 of-street parking spaces in car parks which is completely inadequate for a town with a population of 9,000 moving to 11,000 people.
- D/Cllr. Roberts said that they would continue to fight for the retention of the 2 hours free parking in the town car parks.
- Cllr. Boulton mentioned that the car parking signage is not clear and should be checked for both car parks as well as that you cannot move from one car park to another within an hour.

Buses

- A suggestion was made that the location of the town centre bus stop be re-assessed as there are now over 8 buses an hour stopping in front of the Crown and Sadlers.
- Alternative stops might be at the bottom of Marlborough Street with buses going round outside the Corn Exchange.
- It was suggested there should be some compromise of some buses coming into the Market Place and others stopping on Marlborough Street.
- It was raised that the buses in the Market Place are an important facility for many residents and when the town was asked in a consultation a few years back 80% of residents wanted the bus stop to remain out side the Old Town Hall.

- It was requested that those responsible re-assess how buses go round the Market Place as the movement of the buses currently causes daily problems as they encounter cars on their circuit.

Cllr. Webb mentioned that Faringdon Area Traffic Advisory Committee (FATAC), which meets on the second Monday of each month (next meeting at 10a.m. on Monday 11th December 2023), is one of the forums for discussion of these issues and all are welcome to attend.

6. Town Council Budget and Precept for 2024/25

- a) The meeting received a presentation from Cllr. Leniec, the chairman of the Finance and Audit Committee, on the DRAFT budget proposal following the initial budget meetings. There will be another round of budget meetings in December and January where proposals will be re-considered, amended and finalised.

The meeting NOTED that the DRAFT proposal for the precept request for 2024/25, at this initial stage, is £530,996.

- b) The meeting received suggestions from residents for additional projects to be considered including:
Residents raised the subject of CCTV in the town centre or the possibility of a 'Live Cam'. There are individual business CCTV cameras but no police-monitored CCTV as in the centre of Wantage and Abingdon. Faringdon Town Council does not have the infrastructure or budget to run town centre CCTV but may be possible for smaller businesses to obtain grants towards installation of CCTV. The subject of CCTV or a Web Cam will be put on the agenda for the next Full Council meeting.

7. Public Speaking Time and General Discussion

A resident brought up the subject of the history of the tunnels under Faringdon being a focus as a tourist draw and was signposted to the new leaflet available in the Information Centre. Attendees were encouraged to feed any fresh ideas to the Town Regeneration Working Party.

Meeting ended at 8.50pm