

# FROME TOWN COUNCIL

*making Frome a better place*

## INTERNAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

Wednesday 9 October, 7pm

Saxonvale Centre, Garsdale, Frome. BA11 1RZ

Members of the Internal Affairs Committee are:

Toby Eliot (chair); James Godman; Pippa Goldfinger; Claire Hudson; Dickon Moore; Peter Macfadyen;  
Helen Sprawson - White; Helen Starkie; Mel Usher

and

Cara Honey (Mayor for Young People); Alex Shingler (Deputy Mayor for Young People)

## AGENDA

- 1 Questions, comments and information from the public
- 2 Apologies for absence, declaration of members' interests and minutes from the last meeting on 6 August 2013
- 3 A quick review on previous actions and what is coming up next time
- 4 Allotments – proposed management arrangements with the Allotment Association
- 5 Dog Control Orders – decision to consult the community
- 6 Victoria Park and Mary Baily Playing Field Strategy – including tennis club proposals
- 7 Bowls Club lease – proposed new lease arrangements
- 8 Acquisition of land at Rodden Meadow
- 9 Twinning – whether to support the next quadripartite in 2015 and update on bid to hold 4 conferences in 2014
- 10 Keep Frome Clean update – incl. review of performance of The Landscape Group
- 11 To decide how to appoint Internal Auditors
- 12 Update on registering of deeds
- 13 A brief update on payments over £500 made since the last meeting and other finance matters
- 14 The next meeting will be at 7pm on Tuesday 3 December 2013 at the Saxonvale Centre  
Because the following item is a confidential staff matter, the public and press will be asked to leave
- 15 Confidential item – Staff matters  
Return to public session

Yours sincerely



Paul Wynne, Town Clerk

Frome Town Council, 5 Palmer Street, Frome,  
BA11 1DS

2 October 2013

# **FROME TOWN COUNCIL**

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- 1 Questions, comments and information from the public**
- 2 a. Any apologies for absence?**
  - b. Cllrs to declare any interests on the agenda**
  - c. To consider and approve the minutes of the last meeting held on 6 August 2013**

# FROME TOWN COUNCIL

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## 3 A quick review of previous actions and what is coming up next time

SUMMARY OF RESOLUTION	MINUTE NO.	CMTEE	MEETING DATE	RESPONSIBILITY	PROGRESS REPORT	Target Date
Establish ethical decision making matrix	2013/44	IAC	11/06/2013	Paul Wynne	Review to be given at the meeting 3/12/13	03/12/2013
Frome Town Council website	2013/45	IAC	11/06/2013	Karen Clements	Verbal update from Karen Clements	09/10/2013
Christmas Extravaganza 2013	2013/46	IAC	11/06/2013	Karen Clements	Verbal update from Karen Clements	09/10/2013
Co Op and Lloyds TSB investments	2013/49	IAC	11/06/2013	Jackie Wheeler	See agenda item 13	09/10/2013
One Frome	2013/61	IAC	06/08/2013	Paul Wynne	Co ordinator and chairman to be recruited in October, next meeting on 20 Oct	
Explore the opportunity of FTC challenging MDC to run Frome's car parks	2013/63	IAC	06/08/2013	Jackie Wheeler	On hold at present	
Welshmill Access Project	2013/60	IAC	06/08/2013	Peter Wheelhouse	Work has started and is on schedule. Progressing to plan	03/12/2013
Risk Register		IAC		Jackie Wheeler		03/12/2013
Discuss Work Programme and Budget 2014/15		IAC		Jackie Wheeler		03/12/2013
Expenditure Forecast to date		IAC		Jackie Wheeler		03/12/2013
Internal Auditors Report		IAC		Jackie Wheeler		03/12/2013
Annual Review of Risk Register		IAC		Jackie Wheeler		03/12/2013

**Key**

	Overdue
	On going (on schedule)
	Action required
	Upcoming item

# FROME TOWN COUNCIL

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## **4 For Decision - Agreement of responsibilities between Frome Allotment Association and FTC**

Author: Grounds and Properties Manager

### *Summary*

This paper has been written with the Chairman of the Frome Allotment Association, Neil Cameron. It has also been reviewed by the National Allotment Association.

### *Background*

The Town Council own eight sites around the town. Many of these were transferred from Mendip District Council ownership, are held as statutory allotments and were in a poor condition. FTC has invested in the allotments particularly over the past five years and renewed and repaired the infrastructure on many of the sites. Frome Allotment Association, working in partnership with FTC, has made considerable improvements to all sites. This season also saw the opening of the allotments at Birchill Lane with nearly 100 new plots. This made Frome Town Council one of the biggest allotment providers in the Southwest

Nearly all the infrastructure works have now been completed on all sites and in discussion with the Allotment Association a new arrangement is proposed.

### *Discussion*

There is no formal agreement with the Allotment Association over responsibility for each site. The last agreement was an allotment policy dated 24-01-2007 that concerned improving the sites and overall aims but does not cover specific day-to-day management issues.

There is a need to clarify the relationship and so a draft management agreement has been drawn up between the Allotment Association and Frome Town Council. The main components are that we will no longer fund the smaller projects within the sites but will retain control over trees, a wall at Orchard Street, the entrance track to Vallis allotments and boundary fences. The Association will pay no rent to us but it will fund all the administration cost, insurance, meetings, small projects such as water butts, mowing path ways internal gates and fences and improvements.

### *Recommendation*

Delegate authority to the Town Clerk to sign off a new agreement between the two parties as described above.

## **5 For Decision - Dog control orders**

Author: Grounds and Properties Manager

### *Summary*

Following enthusiasm from the Frome Neighbourhood Policing team to issue fixed penalty fines via dog control order; this paper recommends that FTC agrees dog

# FROME TOWN COUNCIL

## *making Frome a better place*

control orders on land owned by Frome Town Council. These orders would then be enforced by the police.

### *Background*

There are two legislative powers that the Town Council can use for the issue of dogs mess and problem dogs. The Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005 and the dog control orders (prescribed offences and penalties regulations) 2006.

Until now, we have been unable to implement the act because of the need for legal enforcement. The police have now stated that they are willing to enforce the act issuing and collecting the fines so long as we agree dog control orders on FTC land.

Some of the land we manage are play areas while other areas are less intensively used and it would be wrong to create one universal dog control order. There are four types of orders that can be applied to Town Council land.

1. Dog exclusion orders: these are suitable for play areas and heavily used public areas
2. Dogs on lead orders: these are suitable for areas which have high public use
3. Dogs on leads by direction order: which would be used when O/S staff need to restrict dogs when cutting the grass, for example
4. Failure to clean-up dogs mess would be a prosecutable offence on all Town Council land

In order to agree any dog control order we have to consult the public first. We have a view what the most appropriate type of order is best suited to each piece of land and this will form the basis of the consultation. It is not proposed to discuss this detail at this stage but rather to come back to committee with firm recommendations following public consultation. However, if any Cllrs want to give me their views on particular sites please contact me.

There are additional ways of creating an environment where dogs are not seen as a nuisance. These include promoting good dog care and encouraging dog walking in areas that are not intensively used. These are part of the broader and on-going 'Keep Frome Clean' campaign.

### *Recommendations*

1. Proceed with the process of public consultation with a view to adopting dog control orders for FTC sites
2. Return to this committee with firm site by site recommendations
3. Alternatively, the committee could delegate to the Town Clerk the decision on what sort of dog control orders to apply to each site

# FROME TOWN COUNCIL

## *making Frome a better place*

### **6 For Decision – Victoria Park and Mary Baily Playing Field Strategy**

Author: Community Projects Officer

#### *Summary*

This paper describes the progress on the development of a strategic plan for Victoria Park and Mary Baily Playing Field. Specifically, three main components of the plan are discussed: the MUGA application; Frome Selwood Tennis Club proposals for refurbishing/building tennis courts and running both club and public tennis provision; and development of a strategic plan for the whole area.

There are four recommendations for progressing these plans further.

#### *Background*

Victoria Park and Mary Baily Playing Field (hereafter referred to as ‘the park’ unless specified) are extremely important open spaces for the communities of Frome.

However, without an overall strategic plan for these areas, it is difficult to make important decisions about new equipment and uses of the park. This was highlighted by the recent consultation we held to ascertain support for a new Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA). The results illustrated how difficult it is for local people to lend their support to new facilities if we do not know where they will be sited, or how this will fit in with other plans. At the same time, we have been approached by the Frome Selwood Tennis Club (FSTC) who is keen to improve tennis provision in Frome by refurbishing or building new tennis courts.

Therefore, we agreed to work on an overall strategic plan for the park. This plan will be drawn up in consultation with Frome communities, and will give us a firm framework upon which we can make decisions, both about existing provision and about future opportunities such as grants, equipment and other recreation.

#### *Progress*

The MUGA consultation was the first stage in the conversation about whether the park would benefit from this facility. We are now tying together the next stage of the consultation with the development of a strategic plan for the whole area. To date, this has a number of components:

##### **1. MUGA**

Unfortunately our application to Inspired Facilities for the MUGA grant was unsuccessful. However, feedback on the application clarified that while the community development aspect was very strong; the Sports Development Plan needs further work. Therefore we have been encouraged to resubmit our application in December with further work on this aspect, which we aim to do. As before, the location of the facility is not yet decided, it may be more appropriate to site it at the old Showfield, and this will be a key part of the new strategic plan.

# FROME TOWN COUNCIL

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## 2. Tennis Club

FSTC is keen to improve tennis provision in Frome by refurbishing the existing tennis courts, or building new ones. Without a strategic plan developed with local communities, it is not possible to decide whether the courts in Victoria Park should be retained and refurbished, or whether the park would benefit from removal of the courts, with new ones built in Mary Baily Playing Field, near the tennis club and other recreational equipment.

FSTC has now drawn up a comprehensive business plan which allows for the club to refurbish/build the courts, manage the bookings, save enough money to allow for future maintenance and establish a sinking fund to replace the courts at the end of their life.

We have worked with FSTC to ensure that a suitable level of public access pay and play provision is maintained to allow non-club members to use the courts. The proposed schedule in the business plan ensures that there will always be two or three courts open to the public via pay and play except for Tuesday and Thursday evenings (6pm – 9pm) between April – July, which will be exclusively FSTC use. There is a copy of the business plan in the office at Palmer Street which is available for Cllrs to view.

The arrangement would work by FSTC taking responsibility for raising the money for the refurbishment/new build, and leasing the land from FTC once the courts are refurbished/built. To support the funding bid, FTC will contribute some match funding taken from the earmarked reserve for maintenance of the courts. This figure still needs to be decided and is dependent upon the FSTC application being made, but is set out in the FSTC business plan as £9,037 (the current EMR for sports equipment).

It is anticipated that the lease will be set for a period of 12 years which is the approximate expected life of the courts. After this time the lease and arrangement would then be reviewed. FSTC are hoping to submit a Sport England Inspired Facilities bid in December 2013 for the work.

## 3. Developing the Strategic Plan

The team at NVB Architects have kindly offered to work in a voluntary capacity on the development of the strategic plan. They have assimilated the information gathered from the public and local groups to date, and have produced a number of plans that displays this information. We have arranged a joint meeting on Friday 4<sup>th</sup> October with the specific objective of developing three or four key options of what could be done with the area. We can then use these options in the second stage of the consultation to enable local people to express specific ideas about how the layout and use of the park would best suit their needs. Progress is somewhat dependent upon the speed at which NVB Architects are able to work, however we would like to have these options ready for public consultation during Participate Frome week at the beginning of November.

# FROME TOWN COUNCIL

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## *Recommendations*

1. Note the progress with the MUGA application and approve resubmission in December 2013
2. Agree on the Tennis Club proposal for refurbishing/building the tennis courts (refurbishment/building is dependent upon the results of the strategic plan consultation) and leasing the land and the courts from FTC
3. Agree on the Tennis Club proposal for managing the courts for club and public pay and play use
4. Endorse the next stages of drawing up the strategic plan for the park

## **7 For Decision - Bowls Club lease**

Author: Grounds and Properties Manager

### *Summary*

The lease between the Town Council and the Frome Park Bowls Club is due to expire in December. This paper recommends terms of a new lease that have resulted from discussion between the Club and myself.

### *Background*

The bowls club has received an on-going grant of £1000 per year from the council towards the cost of the green keeping. As well as the financial contribution, the Outside Services team have kept the grass around the edge of the green cut, planted the flower beds and collect and store the mower in the council shed three times per week for the season.

### *Discussion*

I feel that this is not a sustainable position for FTC. It is proposed therefore that the bowls club becomes self-funding and applies for grants and sponsorship where possible to supplement income. In order to do this, a much longer lease is required. A longer lease will also provide the club with some security of tenure.

In discussion with the club, I suggest the new lease should include:

- The lease will run for ten years with appropriate notice clauses for both parties
- A payment of £1000 for 2014, £500 for 2015 and then no further funding.
- The bowls club make provision to store their own mower
- The bowls club cut the edges of the green
- The council waives its rights to use the building in the winter
- The bowls club would take responsibility for accommodating members of the public wishing to play on a casual basis
- The bowls club to do basic maintenance on the building

In addition:

- The council will retain the responsibility for the trees and boundary hedges and fences as this will benefit all users of the park.



# FROME TOWN COUNCIL

*making Frome a better place*

- The community projects officer or the FTC fundraiser will support the club to apply for external funding.

I can provide a copy of the draft lease on request.

### *Recommendations*

1. The new lease, along the lines of the bullet points above, is signed by the Town Clerk on behalf of the Council
2. The community projects officer or the FTC fundraiser support the club to apply for external funding.

## **8 For Information – Land at Rodden Meadow**

Author: Town Clerk

This note is to inform IAC that FTC has now completed the purchase of the remaining part of Rodden Meadow. This has been a longstanding challenge; Simon Woollen and I have been trying to persuade the vendor to sell it to us for at least four years.

Work is progressing on working with local groups to transform the meadow and the adjacent Millennium Green into one space. Further updates will be provided in future meetings.

## **9 For Decision: FTC policy on Twinning**

Author: Town Clerk

### *Summary*

Following the twinning quadripartite in the summer there are some decisions that need to be made related to the planned conferences that Murrhardt is applying for EU funding for; FTC presence at next year's quadripartite; and the quadripartite to be held in Frome in 2015. This paper makes recommendations on these subjects in the context of a proposed policy for twinning.

This is the outcome of discussions between the Mayor, Cllr Goldfinger (last year's Mayor), the Leader and myself.

### *Background*

I believe historically, the Twinning Association organised twinning activities on behalf of the town. The role of FTC was minimal. In recent years the Town Council has taken on more of a role in funding and organising events. This year, the Twinning Association, however, organised all arrangements for the trip to Rabka. The Town Council was represented by the Mayor, Mayor for Young People and myself and travel costs were the only FTC financial contribution.

# FROME TOWN COUNCIL

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## *Discussion*

Twinning could bring significant benefits to the community. The potential of young people learning from each other, accessing unique training opportunities, developing their language skills and making lasting friendships is significant. Similarly, the potential for the community as a whole learning from perhaps unique ways of doing business or generating and distributing energy is significant too.

Some of the benefits are realised at present, many are not.

However, the potential for successful twinning should not be dependent on the Town Council. There are groups in the town that can do this better: the Twinning Association; Sports Clubs, Frome College to name three.

Given the priorities of this Council and the resources available it is proposed therefore that the role of FTC should be to encourage twinning by the Mayor and Mayor for Young People attending events but that events and initiatives are led by groups in the town.

It is in this context that the following decisions need to be made.

## *Four conferences – one in each town*

FTC has agreed to be part of an EU funding bid to run four conferences over the next two years – one in each town. The Frome conference on energy is planned for September 2014 and the aim of all four is to bring together practitioners and experts from each town to explore and share best practice. The funding bid will raise approximately £80,000 and will cover all costs. 50% will be provided as an advance payment with the remainder being paid on completion of the four conferences.

This means that half the costs of the conferences will have to be paid and then claimed back from the EU. There is, therefore, a slight chance that the EU may not pay the final 50% because of failure to comply with the terms and conditions.

In order to complete the application the four towns decided to take this small risk. I made this decision in consultation with the Mayor in Rabka in July. If the conferences are delivered in line with the application, the EU will provide the final 50% and the net cost to FTC will be zero.

It is therefore necessary to endorse this decision and allocate a sum of £10,000 in our budget for next year with the intention that the EU grant will re-imburse this spend.

## *Quadripartite in Chateau Gontier 2014*

Next year the quadripartite will be in Chateau Gontier. I believe it to be important for the Mayor and Mayor for Young People to attend, if they wish, but there is little need for me to go to these events as well. It has been argued in the past that an officer with delegated authority was necessary to attend in order to take decisions that the Mayor

# FROME TOWN COUNCIL

## *making Frome a better place*

(as one Cllr) could not. However, I don't think my presence would have made any difference to proceedings in Rabka as the only decision that needed to be made was the one referred to above and this was known before the meeting.

Conversely, there is a benefit for the Mayor and the Mayor for Young People to attend (if they wish).

It is therefore recommended that the Mayor and Mayor for Young People attend the quadripartite in Chateau Gontier next year if they wish and for FTC to cover their costs.

### *Quadripartite in Frome 2015*

Looking forward to 2015, it is Frome's turn to host the quadripartite. The staff time required to organise the last one in Frome was significant and given current and likely future workloads allocating a large portion of staff time to this in 2014/15 is not realistic.

The Twinning Association should be encouraged to build on their successes this year and work with groups in the town to deliver the Frome quadripartite. It is proposed not to allocate a budget or staff time towards the event. It is, however, recommended that the Mayor and Mayor for Young People act as hosts if the Twinning Association so wish.

The Twinning Association and the three twin towns need to be informed of these decisions.

### *Recommendations*

1. FTC encourages groups in the town to realise the potential of twinning
2. Endorse the decision to allocate £10,000 towards the cost of the four-way conference programme in next year's budget with the intention that the EU grant will re-imburse this spend
3. The Mayor and Mayor for Young People attend the quadripartite in Chateau Gontier next year if they wish and for FTC to cover their costs
4. The Twinning Association are encouraged to build on their successes this year and work with groups in the town to deliver the Frome quadripartite in 2015
5. Not to allocate a budget or staff time towards the Frome quadripartite in 2015
6. The Mayor and Mayor for Young People act as hosts to the Frome quadripartite if required by the Twinning Association
7. Inform the twinning association and other towns of these decisions.

# FROME TOWN COUNCIL

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## 10 For Decision – Town Centre Cleaning Update

Author: Town Centre Manager

### *Summary*

This paper updates Cllrs on the street cleaning work of Town Council staff and Mendip DC / The Landscape Group (TLG).

### *Background*

The Landscape Group took over the street cleaning contract for MDC in July this year. Prior to this there had been an on-going issue with the state of cleanliness in the town centre which this Council addressed through the work of our lengthsman. This involved supplementary cleaning every morning, seven days a week. It was hoped that with the new contractors in place there would be a marked improvement and meetings were held with MDC and TLG ahead of the start date to make this clear.

### *Progress to date*

The start of the new contract did not mark a sudden improvement in town centre cleanliness and the lengthsman continued daily additional cleaning and reporting. Contact with MDC and TLG has continued to address the need to meet the contractual standard. A high level officer's meeting at the end of July expressed continuing dissatisfaction with progress and Mendip's ability to monitor the contract.

Since that meeting I have undertaken daily tours of the centre with a camera. Daily photo reports were then supplied to MDC, effectively providing the necessary monitoring service. This did result in improvements as areas specifically highlighted were then dealt with, however this was reactionary and did not address the overall standard. In order for MDC to follow up shortcomings with the contractors, our lengthsman ceased regular additional cleaning but continued to monitor the situation, respond to specific incidents and focus on other areas like graffiti removal.

I met with MDC and TLG on 22 Aug and have been reporting issues directly to TLG as necessary i.e. still most days. The direct reporting gives a quicker response time since issues are then dealt with in the same day. It has also resulted in additional work by TLG, such as additional visits by mechanical sweepers when required. A new 'barrow man' has been employed which has contributed to some improvement recently. This is achieving positive results in the areas I inform TLG about. This improvement, however, is entirely due to FTC pursuing a monitoring role which ought to be MDC's or TLG manager's role.

While on holiday in September, we decided not to monitor street cleansing and the town centre reverted almost immediately back to a grubby and uncared for environment. It is my view that MDC must be able to effectively monitor and enforce the standards required by its contract.

# FROME TOWN COUNCIL

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From October TLG are re-structuring their grass cutting and street cleaning teams into multi-purpose neighbourhood teams. The initial plan for the Town Council lengthsman was for a six month trial which will also be reviewed in October.

## *Recommendations*

1. Maintain pressure on MDC / TLG to meet the required contractual standard.
2. Further challenge MDC over their ability to monitor and enforce the contract standards
3. Review the most effective use of FTC lengthsman around the work of TLG to avoid duplication and achieve a higher standard of cleanliness in the town

## **11 For Decision – Appointment of Internal Auditor**

Author: Responsible Finance Officer

### *Purpose of the report*

To consider the appointment of Internal Auditor for 2013/14.

### *Background*

Regulation 6 of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2003 as amended imposes a duty on local councils to ‘maintain an adequate and effective system of internal audit of its accounting records and of its system of internal control in accordance with the proper practices in relation to internal control’.

Internal audit is a key component of the system of internal control. The purpose of internal audit is to review whether the systems of financial and other controls over a council’s activities and operating procedures are effective. Internal audit function must be independent of the other financial controls and procedures of the council which are the subject of review. The person or persons carrying out internal audit must also be competent to carry out the role in a way that will meet the business needs of each local council.

We can secure an internal audit in various ways including:

- Appointing a local individual or a member of a panel of individuals administered by a County Association of Local Councils or Branch of the Society of Local Council Clerks. An individual will need to demonstrate adequate independence and competence to meet our needs
- Employing a competent internal auditor who is suitably qualified and has sufficient organisational independence and status to undertake the role;
- Purchasing an internal audit service from the principal authority where it is usual for a small team of employees to be established as internal audit  
Purchasing an internal audit service from a local firm or specialist internal audit practice.

### *Discussion*

The regulations require councils to carry out an annual review of the effectiveness of their system of internal audit. This review is an integral part of continually improving

# FROME TOWN COUNCIL

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governance and accountability. Fair Account, our current internal auditors, did this for us earlier in the year and confirmed we are operating well by completing Part 4 of the 2012/13 annual return.

Council has to agree to appoint an internal auditor every year. Fair Account was appointed Internal Auditor in 2011 and has audited the Town Council's accounts for two financial years.

I am very happy with the service we have received from them. They are thorough, cost effective and happy to investigate additional areas that I feel the need for advice on.

### *Recommendation*

Fair Account be appointed as the Internal Auditor for the accounting period 2013/2014.

## **12 For Information – Update on ‘Deeds Project’**

Authors: Planning & Development Officer and Office Apprentice

### *Summary*

Following adoption of the Risk Register by IAC on 8 January 2013, it was agreed to formally document all title deeds held by FTC. This paper updates Cllrs on progress and recommends that the process be kept up to date as the Council acquires more land in the future.

### *Discussion*

The ‘Deeds Project’ was highlighted to the Council as a high-risk item on the Risk Register. This was due to the fact that it was not clear if all of the land in the Council's ownership or control was formally registered with the Land Registry. The risk being that any un-registered land could be claimed by another through adverse possession. It is also good practice to keep accurate up to date records.

There was also the issue that all of the deeds are in paper copy, all of the documentation has now been scanned to create an electric copy and the current filing system has been updated. This was followed by an enquiry to Land Registry to establish which areas of land had been formally registered. This confirmed that, historically some areas of land had not been registered.

FDC Law, are currently in the process of registering the land, which should be completed within the next few weeks.

### *Recommendations*

1. To note that progress of the Deeds project to date
2. To amend the Risk Register accordingly and table this for approval at IAC on 3 December 2013
3. To agree to continue with the filing process in both hard copy and electronic format to keep all land acquisitions up to date
4. To ensure that all future land acquisitions are registered at the time of purchase

# FROME TOWN COUNCIL

*making Frome a better place*

## **13 For Information - A brief update on payments over £500 made since the last meeting and other finance matters**

Author: Responsible Finance Officer

A breakdown of Income and Expenditure as at 31 August 2013 is shown at appendix 1.

Payments equal to or over £500 for the period 1 July to 31 August 2013 is shown at appendix 2.

### *Income*

Significant income received during July and August was the Public Works Loan Board loan for the Cheese and Grain redevelopment (£500,000), the Co Operative investment plus interest matured (£303,020), Youth Services grant funding from SCC (£24,027) that enabled Tessa Hibbert to be contracted for three months (£16,250) to research Youth Services provision in Frome. Somerset County Council Community Warden Scheme grant (£3,000) for agreed work on highways in Frome and Beckington parishes. Electricity generated from PV panels for the quarter March to May (£2,339). Rent income was reduced following the flat above the Town Council offices being vacated at the end of July and Victoria Park café rent (£250) being subject to VAT. The Information Centre continues to provide income through sales of books, maps, souvenirs and commission on various event ticket sales.

### *Expenditure*

Aside from normal monthly running costs, significant expenditure in July and August was Cheese & Grant support grant (£8,995), grant to Positive Action on Cancer (£5,000), grant for Frome Festival (£10,000), Frome Carnival (£2,000). The Frome App went live (£3,000). Work continues on the Neighbourhood Plan and Town Centre redevelopment (£15,000) and work commenced on the Cheese & Grain development project (£18,000). Stall umbrellas were purchased for use at the Frome Supermarket (£13,800), Tickleberry Alley (beside Mary Baily Field) fencing (£11,160) funded from S106 agreement and Town office renovation architect fees (£4,650).

### *Budget Savings*

No significant budget savings were identified in July and August. However, correspondence with MDC and the Valuation Office is ongoing to reduce the business rates on the former Western Woodcraft building.

### *Reserves/Balance Sheet*

The Balance Sheet at appendix 3 shows the deposits in the bank, this includes the new Lloyds 90 day investment (£210,000), the Public Works Loan Board (£500,000) deposited in a Lloyds Instant Access as significant expenditure on the C & G project is anticipated in September and subsequent months. Total reserves stand at £1,550,715 as at 31 August 2013.

# FROME TOWN COUNCIL

*making Frome a better place*

It was resolved to establish a General Reserve at a minimum of £180,000. The GR as at 01 April 2013 was £224,958 which included the DCLG Town Team grant (£10,000) the Dippy expenditure (£20,000), leaving a balance of £15,000 over and above the minimum GR (£180,000).

## *Section 106 agreements*

The Section 106 agreements Locks Hill and Sunnybank, Portway, (£22,754) have been approved by MDC for the purchase of land at Rodden Meadow. MDC's legal team are finalising the agreement to transfer the monies to FTC. The Open Spaces enhancement Showfield (£44,398.00) is still waiting MDC approval.

The intention is to pursue the S106 agreement McCarthy & Stone, Rossetti House development (£10,000) to incorporate it in the River Frome Project which secured funding from the MDC New Homes Bonus Legacy fund (£20,000).

## *Investments*

£210,000 was deposited with Lloyds offering a special 90 day investment at 0.9%. After investigation in consultation with the Chair of IAC, I decided that investments with Lloyds, CCLA, Co Op, Handelsbanken, Triodos and Unity were in line FTC's financial regulations and ethical matrix. However, with the Co-op reporting huge losses at the end of August, I decided to put the proposed investments on hold pending further investigation. At present all reserves are in the Lloyds Instant access account.

## *Recommendations*

1. Note the Town Council's financial position as at 31 August 2013
2. Consult with the Chair of IAC and review present financial risks before investing in the banks listed above

**14 The next meeting will be at 7pm on Tuesday 3 December 2013 at the Saxonvale Centre**

**15 Because the next item on the agenda is a confidential staff matter the public and the press are asked to leave**



# FROME TOWN COUNCIL

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## Draft Minutes of a meeting of the Internal Affairs Committee

Wednesday 6 Aug, at 7pm  
Saxonvale Centre, Garsdale, Frome. BA11 1RZ

**Present:**

Councillors: Toby Eliot; Dickon Moore; Mel Usher.  
Alex Shingler (Deputy Mayor for Young People)

**In attendance:**

Claire Wilson (Somerset Standard), Cllr Nick White, Paul Wynne (Town Clerk), Jackie Wheeler (Responsible Finance Officer), Caroline Stevens (Outside Services Administration Officer), Laura Poulton (Administration Officer)

12 members of the public

Minute Ref	Agenda Item	Action
2013/53/IAC	<p><b>1 QUESTIONS, COMMENTS AND INFORMATION FROM THE PUBLIC</b> The Secretary of the Frome Park Bowls Club, Brain Lye, raised their concern over the Frome Steiner School impacting on parking in Park Road and therefore impacting on their club attendance and membership. Cllr White suggested that the club approach the Steiner School to see if they would be willing to allow members to use their car park outside of school hours. Cllr Usher suggested contacting the Memorial Theatre and Cllr Moore suggested contacting Gavin Eddy at Forward Space. The Town Clerk asked Brian to leave his contact details with the Administration Officer who would then forward a list of contacts for the Frome Park Bowls Club.</p>	PWy
2013/54/IAC	<p><b>2 a. APOLOGIES</b> The Chairman formally opened the Council meeting at 7.18pm and apologies of absence were received from Cllrs Godman, Goldfinger, Hudson, Macfadyen, Sprawson –White and Starkie.</p>	
2013/55/IAC	<p><b>2 b. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS</b> None was received.</p>	
2013/56/IAC	<p><b>2 c. MINUTES</b> The minutes of the Internal Affairs Committee meeting held on 11 June 2013 were approved as a true record of the meeting and signed by the Chair.</p>	

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<p><b>2013/57/IAC</b></p>	<p><b>3 REVIEW OF PREVIOUS ACTIONS AND WHAT IS COMING UP NEXT TIME</b>          First Bus had confirmed they will ensure there is a service which includes the Medical Practice. In addition a smaller bus company was very enthusiastic about also having a service that would include the Medical Practice.</p>	
<p><b>2013/58/IAC</b></p>	<p><b>4 FOR DECISION - MDC'S GRANT RELATED TO CHANGES IN COUNCIL TAX BENEFITS</b>          Cllr Eliot explained that the £117k grant from MDC was given to town and parish Councils following National government changed to Council Tax benefits resulting in an increase in the precept. He noted that at the last meeting FTC officers were going to investigate the legality of offering a refund to all Frome residents. The Town Clerk had received advice that to do this could leave FTC open to legal challenge. It was decided not to progress this idea as a result. It was also decided not to place the £117k in reserves and reduce the precept next year as there is uncertainty over whether a grant will be awarded again next year.</p> <p>The recommendations were:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. £55,000 to support the parts of the community in greatest need, initially, by helping to establish a project in the town to support vulnerable people and families</li> <li>2. £55,000 to support training opportunities for young people in the town. The detail of this project will be brought to a future meeting for approval.</li> <li>3. £7,000 to enable the Participation Week and the Community Fair to be delivered. This project has already been agreed but the £7,000 will enable us to be confident that it will happen by contracting a local organisation to run it on FTC's behalf.</li> </ol> <p>Proposed Cllr Usher, seconded Cllr Moore, agreed unanimously.</p>	<p><b>PWy</b></p>
<p><b>2013/59/IAC</b></p>	<p><b>5 FOR DECISION – ESTABLISHMENT OF FROME RESOURCE CENTRE</b>          The recommendations were:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Note that a new Frome based charity called the Frome Resource Centre for Family and Individual Resilience is being established</li> <li>2. For the Town Clerk to appoint an individual for three months at a cost of up to £3,000 to establish the charity, find premises, contact other agencies in the town and put together a business plan for a Frome Resource Centre</li> <li>3. The Committee will be kept informed of progress during the autumn</li> </ol>	

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	<p>4. Allocate £10,000 from the MDC grant related to Council Tax</p> <p>Proposed Cllr Eliot, seconded Cllr Moore, agreed unanimously.</p>	
<b>2013/60/IAC</b>	<p><b>6 FOR DECISION – WELSHMILL ACCESS PROJECT PROPOSAL</b></p> <p>When obtaining quotes the Outside Services Administration Officer contacted Mack Civils &amp; Construction Limited who proposed to combine the Welshmill access project with a training project for young people which would be run by Mindset. Twelve young Frome based people had already been selected and had received their induction training. Mindset hopes to select six of the candidates to work on the Welshmill access project in order to obtain their qualification.</p> <p>The total cost of the project would be £116k, with £8k from Community Spaces budget and £8k from Youth Training budget. Cllr Usher noted it was a fantastic project and congratulated all those that were involved in organising it.</p> <p>The recommendation was to agree to spend £16,000 to enable the Welshmill Access Project and associated training to proceed utilising existing budgets.</p> <p>Proposed Cllr Eliot, seconded Cllr Moore, agreed unanimously.</p>	<b>PWh/CS</b>
<b>2013/61/IAC</b>	<p><b>7 FOR DECISION - ONE FROME CO-ORDINATOR APPOINTMENT</b></p> <p>The Town Clerk introduced the background to One Frome which was previously known as the Frome Forum. He noted the next step was to employ a co-ordinator to implement actions that come out of meetings. FTC would match funding already committed by MDC.</p> <p>The Town Clerk noted that SCC was considering contributing. It was suggested a second recommendation be added for the Town Clerk to persuade SCC to confirm match funding.</p> <p>The recommendation was to agree to allocate £7,500 to employ a part time co-ordinator to administer One Frome.</p> <p>A second recommendation was added for the Town Clerk to make strenuous efforts to persuade SCC to contribute £5,000.</p> <p>Proposed Cllr Eliot, seconded Cllr Usher, agreed by majority.</p>	<b>PWy</b>
<b>2013/62/IAC</b>	<p><b>8 FOR INFORMATION - UPDATES FROM THE TOWN CENTRE MANAGER</b></p>	

# FROME TOWN COUNCIL

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	<p>There had been ten responses from web designers to the advertisement to redesign the FTC website, all the proposals had been of a high quality. The next meeting of the website group was scheduled for 7 August where they would consider the applications and decide on the four best proposals.</p> <p>With regard to the Keep Frome Clean Campaign, the police have agreed to enforce dog control orders and give out fixed penalty notices for those that did not pick up after their dog. The Outside Services Administration Officer confirmed that she was currently discussing the areas that would most benefit from a dog control order.</p> <p>With regard to the Christmas Extravaganza 2013 the Town Clerk confirmed that Sunrise Festivals who were to organise the event had pulled out after going into administration. The Town Centre Manager was in discussions with two other event organisers in the town about taking on some of the organisation of the event.</p>	
<p><b>2013/63/IAC</b></p>	<p><b>9 FOR DECISION – FROME CAR PARKS</b></p> <p>The Responsible Finance Officer noted that all the car parks were profitable apart from North Parade and that if FTC were take on the car parks rates would still need to be paid to MDC.</p> <p>Cllr Usher confirmed that MDC make £1.2 million profit from car parks across the Mendip District, £400,000 of this is from Frome. Despite this they only spend 1% of that figure on the maintenance of the car parks.</p> <p>The recommendations were:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To note the Car Park income and expenditure figures provided by MDC</li> <li>2. Explore the opportunity of FTC challenging MDC to run Frome’s car parks</li> </ol> <p>Proposed Cllr Elliot, seconded Cllr Moore, agreed unanimously.</p>	<p><b>JW</b></p>
<p><b>2013/64/IAC</b></p>	<p><b>10 FOR INFORMATION - A BRIEF UPDATE ON PAYMENTS OVER £500 MADE SINCE THE LAST MEETING AND OTHER FINANCE MATTERS</b></p> <p>Cllrs received for information:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Payments made (over £500 in value) since last meeting.</li> <li>b. A breakdown of Income and Expenditure as at 30 June 2013</li> <li>c. Balance sheet and reserves as at 30 June 2013</li> </ol>	

# FROME TOWN COUNCIL

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	<p>CLLr Eliot noted that although the figures show no budget savings this was positive as it demonstrated that spending was exactly as it should be. He also clarified that the ear marked reserves were now £15,000 in addition to the £180,000.</p> <p>A member of the public was invited to speak and she queried what Siren Communications were employed to do. The Responsible Finance Officer confirmed that the DCLG had given the Town Team £10,000 to promote the town and attract more visitors. Siren were contracted by FTC on behalf of the Town Team over a three month period to raise Frome's national profile including organising press trips for journalists to visit and experience Frome for themselves and therefore provide positive national publicity.</p>	
<b>2013/65/IAC</b>	<b>12 DATE OF NEXT MEETING</b> The next meeting will be at 7pm on Wednesday 9 October at the Saxonvale Centre	
The Chair closed the meeting at 8.30pm		