

# FROME TOWN COUNCIL

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## INTERNAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

Wednesday 8 October 2014, 7pm

Saxonvale Centre, Garsdale, Frome. BA11 1RZ

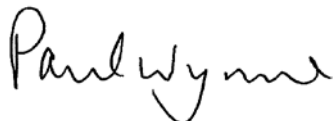
Members of the Internal Affairs Committee are:

Eve Berry; Toby Eliot; Pippa Goldfinger; Claire Hudson; Dickon Moore (Chair); 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 5 August 2014
- 3 Outstanding Actions and Forthcoming Items
- 4 Mendip Watch - summary of MDC's outstanding actions
- 5 To decide whether to establish Dog Control Orders on FTC land
- 6 An update on the Christmas Lights and Christmas Extravaganza
- 7 To decide on whether to appoint the current Internal Auditors for a further year
- 8 A brief update on payments over £500 made since the last meeting and other financial matters
- 9 Health and Safety update
- 10 The next meeting will be at 7pm on Tuesday 2 December, Saxonvale Centre  
Because the following item is a confidential staff matter, the public and press will be asked to leave
- 11 Confidential item – Staff matters  
Return to public session

Yours sincerely



Paul Wynne, Town Clerk,  
Frome Town Council, 5 Palmer Street, Frome, BA11 1DS  
1 October 2014

# **FROME TOWN COUNCIL**

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## **AGENDA**

- 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 5 August 2014**

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## 3 Outstanding Actions and Forthcoming Items

SUMMARY OF RESOLUTION	MINUTE NO.	CMTEE	MEETING DATE	RESPONSIBILITY	PROGRESS REPORT	Target Date
Dog control orders	2014/38	IAC	11/06/2014	Paul Wynne	On agenda	08/10/2014
s106 expenditure	2014/34	IAC	11/6/14	Jackie Wheeler	The s106 agreement for the MUGA has been transferred from MDC to FTC.	
Improving the infrastructure to support tourism	2014/37	IAC	11/6/14	Peter Wheelhouse	Work is in progress on the development of a signage and landscaping scheme for the Market Yard. There have also been discussions with some of the venues around the Market Yard and the Senior Economic Development Officer at Mendip District Council. Those discussions relate to the design of a feasibility study to consider how this space can develop as an arrival point and cultural destination. Arts Council funding is currently being sought to enable this feasibility study to proceed.	08/10/2014
Any accidents or other incidents related to health & safety since the last meeting (standing item)		IAC			On agenda	08/10/2014
Appointment of Internal Auditors		IAC		Jackie Wheeler	On agenda	08/10/2014
Plans for Christmas lighting		IAC		Allan Bennett	On agenda	08/10/2014
Discussion on next year's work programme and budget		IAC		Jackie Wheeler		02/12/2014
Risk Register		IAC		Jackie Wheeler		03/02/2015
Ethical Decision Making Matrix annual review	2014/19	IAC	09/04/2014	Jackie Wheeler		08/04/2015

**Key**

	Overdue
	On going (on schedule)
	Action required
	Upcoming item

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## **4 Mendip Watch – summary of outstanding actions from MDC**

See Appendix 1

## **5 For Decision – Dog Control Orders**

Author: Town Clerk / Administration Officer

At the last meeting on 5 August Cllrs agreed to proceed with the Dog Control Order process with the amendment to the times dogs must be on leads in Victoria Park. The next step was to consult formally with MDC and to undertake a public consultation on the proposals. MDC were consulted although we have received no formal reply. However, I know the officer is happy with our proposals and that they mirror those of MDC.

On 11 September the final stage in the process began with a 28 day public consultation. The details of this were published in the Frome Standard as a public notice and on the Frome Town Council website as well as notice boards in the council office, the Library and on every site impacted by the proposed DCOs. The notice can be seen at Appendix 2. Cllrs should note that the fixed penalty will be £80.

Members of the public were invited to make any comments on the proposed DCO's by 9 October 2014. To date we have received one response neither in favour nor against the proposals. Obviously, the consultation formally ends the day after this meeting. A verbal update of any other responses will be given on the night. That leaves a maximum of 5 hours until 9 October and in these circumstances I recommend that Cllrs make the final decision at the meeting.

### *Recommendations*

1. Implement Dog Control Orders within two weeks of Thursday 9 October (in accordance with regulations)
2. Produce the public notices for each of the open space
3. Inform the police and Mendip District Council accordingly
4. Inform the public of this decision through the various media available to us, including Facebook
5. Review DCOs at IAC on 8 April 2015 (at the end of the winter period) and then again in October 2015 (at the end of the summer period).

## **6 For Information – an update on Christmas lights and plans for the Extravaganza**

Author: Planning & Regeneration Apprentice

### *Summary*

This report provides a brief introduction to plans for the Christmas Extravaganza to be held on 28 and 29 November this year which will be supplemented by a full briefing by Faye Penfold at the meeting. In addition, the report sets out in detail the arrangements for Christmas lighting 2014-16. This follows an exercise to secure

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competitive quotations from 3 suppliers in line with our financial regulations and discussion with the Leader of the Council and town centre retailers.

### *Christmas Extravaganza*

Common Sense Media will provide a verbal update on the Christmas Extravaganza.

### *Christmas lighting - background*

Councillors will be aware that for the last 3 years, the Council has had a contract with Blachere Illuminations to supply and install Christmas lights for Frome Town Centre. Now that the contract has come to an end there is a need to put in place a new arrangement.

The main requirements for our 2014-16 lighting scheme were:

1. The scheme should be 'neutral'. The design and colour selection should fit seamlessly with a wide range of Extravaganza themes. This will better place FTC to take advantage of any offer made by the lighting provider at the end of the 3 year agreement.
2. The scheme should include lighting along Cheap St, Stony St and Catherine Hill over the Christmas period. This is an opportunity to encourage the Chamber of Commerce, St. Catherine Hill Traders Association and the Frome Retail Group to play a more active role in the putting on of the Christmas Extravaganza as well as generate more footfall in these areas over Christmas.
3. The scheme must also include a lighting solution for the gap in the Market Place, bolt-testing of cross street wires, switch on and on-going maintenance services and a 2 season guarantee on all lights.
4. A purchase option for longer term savings

### *Selection of a Lighting Provider*

We received competitive quotations from 3 leading festive lighting providers - The Festive Lighting Company, Gala Lights and Blachere Illuminations. With an attractive scheme and at the cheapest price offered, Blachere were identified as our preferred supplier for 2014-2016 and a hire agreement has now been entered into. Their flexible and pro-active approach to design and delivery has resulted in a finely-tailored scheme which comprises of:

- White and gold festoon lighting and braid-wrapped arches along Cheap St, Stony St and Catherine Hill
- New cross-street wires in the Market Place which will hold a double-span motif
- Installation of FTC owned lighting and additional lighting on the two Christmas trees
- Cross-street displays on Bath St and North Parade and all other associated works as stipulated above

Illustrations will be displayed at the meeting.

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## *Cost of works*

The final agreement was received on Monday 29 September and has been signed and posted to Blachere. The first year total for these works will be £13,351.62. The second and third year costs for the works are £10,896.62 in each year. Storage and maintenance of the purchased lights will be provided by Blachere. At the end of the agreement Blachere will assess the condition of the lights and will advise us on further usage and refurbishment options. We will also be working closely with Blachere around arrangements for the Christmas Trees.

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

Author: Responsible Finance Officer

### *Purpose of the report*

To consider the appointment of Internal Auditor for 2014/15.

### *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; and
- 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 governance and accountability.

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As part of the 2013/14 audit, the external auditors Grant Thornton requested detailed information to support that the town council maintained throughout the year an adequate and effective system of internal audit of the council accounting records and control systems. The information provided to GT included the appointment process of the internal auditor, reports, the process by which the council ensured the internal auditor was competent and independent of the council, and minutes where the internal auditors were discussed and written confirmation that all issues raised by internal and external auditors have been address. GT were satisfied with the information provided.

The council has to agree to appoint an internal auditor annually. Fair Account was appointed as internal auditor in 2011 and has competently audited the Town Council's accounts for three financial years. During 2013/14 Fair Account investigated FTC's financial management; risk management; adherence to legislation, Standing Orders, Financial Regulations, the Code of Conduct, and council procedures and internal controls; fraud and corruption risk; personnel records and payroll. Areas to be reviewed are agreed with them prior to their quarterly visits.

I am very happy with the service received from them. They are very thorough auditing FTC's accounts quarterly, and pleased to provide advice on any accounting related topics.

#### *Recommendation*

Fair Account is appointed as the Internal Auditor for the accounting period 2014/15.

## **8 For Information - A brief update on payments over £500 made since the last meeting**

Author: Responsible Finance Officer

A breakdown of Income and Expenditure as at 30 September 2014 is shown at Appendix 3.

#### *Income*

The second instalment of the Precept (£511k) and VAT repayment for quarter 1 (£12k) were the significant incomes received.

Invoices have been submitted to the New Homes Bonus fund for release of the £20k grant awarded in 2013/14 for the River Frome Project for the Henley Way footpath.

#### *Expenditure*

Aside from normal monthly running costs, the second round of Partnership & Community Development Grants (£21k), Project Grants (£10.5k) and Youth Bank (£1.9k) including Edventure, Merlin Theatre, Allotments Assoc, Incredible Edibles and Frome FM were awarded. Fair Frome received funding for 2014/15 (£16.k) A total of seven Community Toilet Scheme applicants were funded (£3.5k). Mindset Training commenced work on the construction of the new River Frome/Henley Way footpath (£19.6k). Two surveys were commissioned on the Social Services building (£3k).

Councillors are invited to spot check an invoice over £500 through to payment, see Appendix 4.

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## *Budget Savings/Overspends*

Budgets are on target after the first half of the year. No significant over or underspend for the remaining six months is forecast other than the Outside Services salary budget (£10k), while Legal Fees is forecast to overspend by £5k to £15k.

## *Viring from salary and the Open Spaces maintenance budget*

Currently there are two part time lengthsman vacancies in the Outside Services team. These vacancies were not anticipated and due to relocation and family commitments, but in order to keep the continuity of daily H&S play equipment checks and litter collection, this work was contracted on a short term basis to the Landscape Group. It is proposed to extend this contract and to include additional litter collection in and around the town centre whilst a decision is taken on replacement staff recruitment.

In order to achieve this it is proposed to vire £21k from the Outside Services salary budget to the Community Open Spaces budget. The forecast underspend of this budget is net of this decision.

## *Reserves/Balance Sheet*

The Balance Sheet shows the deposits currently held in the bank and investments. Total reserves stand at £1,585,197 as at 30 September 2014. Appendix 5

## *Section 106 agreements*

The s106 from the Rossetti House development (£10,000) is part funding the River Frome Project. MDC lawyers have prepared a deed of variation and it requires the approval of the new owners of Rossetti House, Sunrise Healthcare.

The s106's from the Oval Estates (Bath) Ltd, Property 6-9 Naishes St (£10,560), the Portway Frome Development, Conduit Nursery (£24,230) for expenditure on the provision and installation of a multi-use games area on Mary Bailey Playing Field, has been agreed and sealed and signed and returned to MDC for payment.

The s106 from the former Mendip Lodge Hotel (£38,212) for improvements to the Market Yard – tree planting, maps and signage to other parts of the town: the proposals for how the contribution will be spent have now supported in principle by the district ward councillors. A detailed scheme is being refined prior to submission to MDC.

No progress on transferring the Showfield Open Spaces enhancement or Garston Road open space s106.

## *Investments*

Short term (90day) investments with a fixed rate of 0.57% have been made with Lloyds Bank in line with the Investment Strategy (Appendix 5).

## *Recommendations*

1. Note the council's financial position as at 30 September 2014
2. Agree to vire £21,000 from the Outside Services salary budget into the Community Open Spaces budget



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**9 For Information – Health and safety update**

Author: Town Clerk

We have had a spate of vandalism in Welshmill play area, Weylands and Victoria Park resulting in equipment and the Bandstand becoming dangerous. These pieces of equipment have all been made safe and repaired. Even so, it is important to note that this type of vandalism has got worse and more organised. Sockets, hacksaws and ladders will have been required to carry it out and it appears to be happening during the day. The police are involved and investigating and the open spaces team are checking equipment three times a day to ensure public safety.

**10 The next meeting will be at 7pm on Tuesday 2 December, Saxonvale Centre**

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

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

Tuesday 5 August 2014 at 7pm  
Saxonvale Centre, Garsdale, Frome. BA11 1RZ

**Present:**

Councillors: Eve Berry; Toby Eliot; Claire Hudson; Dickon Moore; Mel Usher  
Alex Shingler (Deputy Mayor for Young People)

**In attendance:**

Caroline Wood (Frome Standard), Jackie Wheeler (Responsible Finance Officer), Simon Woollen (Grounds & Properties Manager), Laura Poulton (Administration Officer)

3 members of the public

Minute Ref	Agenda Item	Action
<b>2014/41/IAC</b>	<p><b>1 QUESTIONS, COMMENTS AND INFORMATION FROM THE PUBLIC</b></p> <p>Charles Wood asked why the grant funding from MDC was not shown as part of general reserves. The Responsible Finance Officer explained that the information was correct as of 30 June 2014, for July it would show as part of the ear marked reserves for the Frome Community Hub project. Charles Wood enquired as to what had been asked from MDC with regard to the One Frome project. Cllr Usher explained that he wrote a letter to Cllr Harvey Siggs asking for a discussion to see how to move forward however he had not received a response.</p> <p>Margaret Merrell expressed her disappointment that the proposal to keep dogs on leads at all times in Victoria Park was to be reversed. Cllr Moore noted her concerns would be addressed when the item came up for discussion.</p>	
<b>2014/42/IAC</b>	<p><b>2 a. APOLOGIES</b></p> <p>The Chair formally opened the Council meeting at 7.10pm and apologies of absence were received from Cllrs Goldfinger, Macfadyen, Starkie and Sprawson - White.</p>	
<b>2014/43/IAC</b>	<p><b>2 b. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS</b></p> <p>A declaration was received from Cllr Hudson who has a seat on MDC that her view on any items on this agenda as an FTC member were not necessarily those as her role as an MDC Cllr.</p>	
<b>2014/44/IAC</b>	<p><b>2 c. MINUTES</b></p> <p>The minutes of the Internal Affairs Committee meeting held on 11 June 2014 were approved as a true record of the meeting and signed by the Chair.</p>	

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<p><b>2014/45/IAC</b></p>	<p><b>3 AN UPDATE ON WHAT THE COUNCIL IS WORKING ON AT THE MOMENT</b></p> <p>The Responsible Finance Officer confirmed that the representative for the Local Legacy Fund panel was selected by officers. She also clarified that the Community Environment Fund was for projects that are of natural build or of social benefit to the Cllrs' ward. To date 80% of the fund had not been spent and the fund was open until 2015. She also noted that she had been in contact with the Chair and Clerk of the Local Government Pension Scheme committee who said that FTC's letter raising concerns about their lack of ethical investment policy would be raised at their next meeting. However, it was not on the agenda subsequently.</p>	
<p><b>2014/46/IAC</b></p>	<p><b>4 MENDIP WATCH – SUMMARY OF OUTSTANDING ACTIONS FROM MDC</b></p> <p>At the last meeting it was agreed Cllr Hudson would approach officers at MDC for an update on each of the outstanding actions. She explained that she had spoken to Stuart Brown (Chief Executive), Donna Nolan (Corporate Manager Governance, Assets and Public Spaces and Monitoring Officer) and Cllr Harvey Siggs (Leader of the Council) and they provided the following information.</p> <p><i>The Dippy</i> Stuart explained this was likely to go ahead imminently.</p> <p><i>North Parade</i> An unexpected valuation for the land had come up and MDC needed to analyse this before proceeding.</p> <p><i>Henley Way</i> Cllr Hudson was expecting a reply from Stuart Brown about the area the following week and would forward his response for Cllrs to see.</p> <p><i>Garston Road</i> The issue was that Bloor Homes had broken their planning conditions by allowing Wessex Water to install a plastic water tank that was not load bearing. Stuart indicated that the transfer of the land would happen quicker if FTC were willing to take on the land with the restriction of the water tank otherwise the issue of the planning condition violation would have to be explored further.</p> <p><i>One Frome</i> Stuart Brown was unaware of a letter about the project and asked Cllr Usher forward a copy of the letter he originally sent to Cllr Siggs to Stuart to allow him to reply.</p> <p><i>Showfield</i> MDC were unable to move further on this until the issue of the outstanding village green application had been resolved.</p> <p><i>Planning board meeting re. Frontier Estates application</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>MU</b></p>

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	<p>The request to hold the meeting in Frome had not been refused rather they were currently waiting to see what else will be on the agenda to make sure the meeting is held in the most accessible place for everyone to attend.</p> <p><i>Leisure Centre</i></p> <p>The strategy was quite complex and it would be worth asking Cllr Boyden, who sits on the committee that made the decision about the leisure centre, provides an explanation of the situation so far.</p> <p><i>Electric charging points</i></p> <p>Stuart Brown was currently looking into the request.</p> <p>Cllr Usher thanked Cllr Hudson for following up the actions with MDC however it was still a long list that wasn't getting any shorter. Cllr Hudson raised her concern that the item 'Mendip Watch' did not encourage a more positive relationship with MDC. Both Cllrs Eliot and Usher expressed their opinion that 'Mendip Watch' was the last resort to encourage MDC to take action as previous attempts at communication had not provided any results.</p>	
<p><b>2014/47/IAC</b></p>	<p><b>5 FOR INFORMATION – MAYOR’S DISCUSSIONS</b></p> <p>Cllr Hudson asked that the discussions be widely advertised in advance of the meeting dates.</p> <p>Cllrs noted the paper</p>	<p><b>Cllr Macfadyen</b></p>
<p><b>2014/48/IAC</b></p>	<p><b>6 FOR DECISION - THE NEXT STEP ON DOG CONTROL ORDERS</b></p> <p>Cllr Eliot, in response to the concern raised earlier in the meeting, explained that since the last meeting where it was proposed to enforce dogs are on leads at all times in Victoria Park there was a very strong representation from a group in the town that were against this enforcement. He and the Town Clerk had recently attended a meeting with representatives from the group where they listened to their concerns about the impact of the order. The suggestion was that FTC works toward an order that allows dogs off leads at certain times of the day. The new proposal included two reviews of the DCO's to see if they had an impact.</p> <p>Cllrs Hudson and Berry requested that in the future public consultations are more carefully considered to ensure wider participation and less confusion over the outcome. Cllr Usher proposed a fourth recommendation be added to ensure appropriate signage be erected in the most appropriate locations in Victoria Park and Mary Baily Playing Field.</p> <p>The recommendations were:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Retain the agreement from the last meeting regarding Dog</li> </ol>	

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	<p>Control Orders with the following amendment: solely for Victoria Park, dogs must be on leads from 10am until 6.30pm from 1 April until 30 September and from 1 October until 31 March dogs will be allowed off leads at all times</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. Review this arrangement on 8 April and October 2015</li> <li>3. Return to IAC on 8 October 2014 for final approval</li> <li>4. Ensure correct signage is erected at the most visible locations in Victoria Park and Mary Baily Playing Field</li> </ol> <p>Proposed Cllr Usher, seconded Cllr Eliot, agreed unanimously.</p> <p>Cllr Hudson requested that Cllrs ensured that users of Victoria Park and Mary Baily Playing Field are properly informed of the DCO's once they come into force.</p>	<b>PWy</b>
<b>2014/49/IAC</b>	<p><b>7 FOR INFORMATION - REVISED ARRANGEMENTS TO COVER SARAH RUSSELL'S MATERNITY LEAVE AND OTHER MINOR STAFF MATTERS</b></p> <p>Cllrs noted the paper.</p>	
<b>2014/50/IAC</b>	<p><b>8 FOR INFORMATION - A BRIEF UPDATE ON PAYMENTS OVER £500 MADE SINCE THE LAST MEETING AND OTHER FINANCE MATTERS</b></p> <p>Cllr Moore asked to see invoices from David Partner and Somerset County Council as part of the spot check, both invoices tallied with Appendix 2.</p>	
<b>2014/51/IAC</b>	<p><b>9 FOR INFORMATION – HEALTH AND SAFETY UPDATE</b></p> <p>The Responsible Finance Officer gave an update on the outstanding claim at Mary Baily Playing Field. She had been contacted by FTC insurers Zurich who had not had any correspondence from the claimant since May therefore it was not expected for the claim to progress.</p> <p>Cllrs noted the paper.</p>	
<b>2014/52/IAC</b>	<p><b>10 DATE OF NEXT MEETING</b></p> <p>The next meeting will be at 7pm on Wednesday 8 October 2014, Saxonvale Centre.</p> <p>Cllr Hudson gave her apologies in advance of the next meeting.</p>	
<p>The Chair closed the meeting at 8.03pm</p>		