

FROME TOWN COUNCIL

making Frome a better place

Minutes of a meeting of the External Affairs Committee

Wednesday 17 December 2014 at 7pm
Saxonvale Centre, Garsdale, Frome. BA11 1RZ

Present:

Councillors: Dave Anderson, Eve Berry, Graham Burgess, Adrian Dobinson, Toby Elliot (Chair), Tricia Golinski, Damon Hooton, Peter Macfadyen, Mel Usher, Nick White, Pippa Goldfinger, Adam Boyden

In attendance:

Caroline Wood (Frome Standard), Kevin Lake (Mendip Care and Repair), Peter Wheelhouse (FTC), Jackie Wheeler (FTC), Patrick Moss (FTC), Anna Francis (FTC), Allan Bennett (FTC), Ruth Knagg (FTC), Alison Reid (FTC)

12 members of the public

Minute Ref	Agenda Item	Action
2014/65/EAC	<p>1. QUESTIONS, COMMENTS & INFORMATION FROM THE PUBLIC</p> <p>Toby Elliott addressed the meeting to inform them that Angelfish Films, a Somerset and London based film production company would be filming at the meeting. This is for a film on Frome and how it has changed over the past five years. This has not been commissioned by the Council or any individual councillor. They are filming at the meeting to get a few shots of the Town Council in action.</p> <p>No questions were asked and no comments or information were offered by the public.</p> <p>The Chair formally opened the Council meeting at 7.05 p.m.</p>	
2014/66/EAC	<p>2. SHORT TALK FROM KEVIN LAKE, MENDIP CARE & REPAIR</p> <p>Kevin Lake gave a short presentation on the work of Mendip Care and Repair in repairing properties that have been empty or uninhabitable for long periods of time. He explained how after gaining £1.46 million in government funding 2 years ago a number of properties had successfully been renovated and leased to those with housing needs. The scheme prides itself in not only providing social housing but also in the experience gained by previously unskilled and/or unemployed persons that are the mainstay of the workforce.</p>	

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	<p>Kevin noted that the average cost of refurbishment is approx. £11k which is actually recycling the initial funding loaned against the property and recouped through the generated rent. That there are as many as 6 or 7 projects running at any given time.</p> <p>Peter Wheelhouse suggested there was a link to Mindset Training in Frome and he agreed to put Kevin in touch.</p>	PWh
2014/67/EAC	<p>3. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE, DECLARATION OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS AND MINUTES FROM THE LAST MEETING ON 22 OCTOBER 2014</p> <p>An apology of absence was received from Cara Honey.</p> <p>Declarations of members' interests were received from Cllrs Hooton and Dobinson who have seats on MDC and that their views on any items on this agenda as an FTC member were not necessarily those as their roles as MDC Cllrs.</p> <p>The minutes of the External Affairs Committee meeting held on 22 October 2014 were approved as a true record of the meeting and signed by the Chair.</p> <p>Proposed Cllr White, seconded Cllr Burgess, agreed unanimously.</p>	
2014/68/EAC	<p>4. OUTSTANDING ACTIONS AND FORTHCOMING EVENTS</p> <p>Cllr Usher asked for an update on the Apprenticeship programme as it was taking longer than first anticipated. Peter Wheelhouse said that Frome College would be advertising for the Apprenticeship Coordinator early in 2015. Cllr Burgess asked for progress on the resurfacing of Palmer Street. Peter Wheelhouse explained there had been a redesign of the proposed crossover alongside the existing disabled space and that there was no change expected to the £20k contribution by FTC which had been agreed by Council.</p>	
2014/69/EAC	<p>5. FOR DECISION – TO DECIDE WHETHER TO SUPPORT A SHARE AND REPAIR SHOP IN FROME</p> <p>Anna Francis gave an outline of the principle behind a share and repair shop. The initiative will involve loaning camping equipment and tools, developing skills and linking with Fair Frome in a bid to minimise food waste. The shop would be occupied rent free for 3</p>	

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	<p>years and as a pop-up shop those involved would design and make the shop furniture enabling them to move easily to another empty shop if and when the lease expired. Funding of £7k is requested from FTC to enable a shop manager to be recruited.</p> <p>Cllr White asked if an income could be generated from items rented out and used to fund a paid member of staff. Anna explained that that would be the longer term plan but the funding would enable the recruitment of the manager in the short term. External funding would also be sought to raise a further £7k.</p> <p><i>Recommendation</i> Fund the start-up of the shop and project manage it for six months until it is set up sustainably at a cost of £7k.</p> <p>Proposed Cllr Hooton, seconded Cllr Golinski, agreed unanimously Cllr Boyden arrived at 7.40pm</p>	AF
2014/70/EAC	<p>6. FOR DECISION - A REVIEW OF THE OPEN SPACES STRATEGY AND CONSIDER ACQUISITION OF TOWER VIEW PLAY AREA</p> <p>Cllr Goldfinger updated the meeting about emails she has received from residents of The Mount regarding a perceived threat to the Tower View play area. The concern is that Mendip DC may be planning to sell the land for housing. Cllr Goldfinger expressed concern that members of the Mendip Corporate Asset Committee (CAMG) had met in secret to discuss this earlier in the week. Cllr Hooton said as it was commercially sensitive; the Tower View discussion excluded the public but that was otherwise open.</p> <p>Ruth Knagg Community Projects officer introduced members to the revised Open Spaces Strategy as printed in Appendix 2.</p> <p><i>Recommendation</i> 1. Adopt the revised Open Spaces Strategy.</p> <p>Proposed Cllr White, seconded Cllr Anderson, agreed unanimously.</p> <p>2. Propose to MDC the freehold transfer of the open space at Tower View along with an appropriate dowry.</p> <p>Proposed Cllr White, seconded Cllr Burgess, agreed by majority. Cllr Dobinson abstained.</p> <p>Cllr Goldfinger left at 8p.m.</p>	PWy

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2014/71/EAC	<p>7. FOR DECISION – TO CONSIDER WHETHER TO APPROACH MDC TO ACQUIRE LAND AT PACKSADDLE.</p> <p>Cllr Boyden introduced this item which concerned the proposal to transfer the freehold of land at Packsaddle Way/Pedlars Grove and Chapman’s Close to FTC.</p> <p><i>Recommendations</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Propose to MDC the freehold transfer and an appropriate dowry of the open spaces at Packsaddle Way/Pedlars Grove and Chapman’s Close in order to progress the Open Spaces Strategy and help realise the local community’s ambitions for their area. <p>Proposed Cllr Anderson, seconded Cllr White, agreed majority. Cllr Hooton abstained.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Once transferred work with the community including Packsaddle Community Group and neighbouring residents on plans to improve the open spaces. <p>Proposed Cllr Hooton, seconded Cllr White, agreed unanimously.</p>	<p>PWy</p> <p>RK</p>
2014/72/EAC	<p>8. FOR DECISION – TO CONSIDER CONTRIBUTING TO SOS FROME’S CAMPAIGN TO PURCHASE FIELDS AT WHATCOMBE FOR THE COMMUNITY.</p> <p>Ruth Knag, from the local campaign group explained that those pledging would be investors and no matter how many shares were purchased each would only be entitled to one vote. She further explained that to date £84k has been pledged with the potential of a further £40k if allotments are included on part of the land. £35K is the amount asked for as a one off contribution from FTC.</p> <p>Cllr Elliott made it clear to the Committee this was protecting the area for the future. Cllr White stated that if FTC were to put in the £35k as requested they should have more say than ordinary members.</p> <p><i>Recommendation</i></p> <p>Recommend to Council on 7 January that FTC contributes £35,000 to SOS Frome in order to acquire land at Whatcombe Fields.</p> <p>Proposed Cllr Burgess, seconded Cllr Anderson, agreed by majority.</p>	<p>PWy</p>

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2014/73/EAC	<p>9. AN UPDATE ON PROJECTS THE COMMUNITY PROJECTS OFFICER IS WORKING ON AT PRESENT</p> <p>Cllr White asked if there were plans for an official opening of the now completed MUGA. Ruth Knagg (CPO) suggested an organised Street Snooker match. Cllr Anderson asked for an update on the Network Rail situation at the new path joining Henley Way to Welshmill Lane and Ruth was able to confirm that clearance has been granted, and it will now only be a matter of weeks until the licence is finally issued.</p> <p>The committee noted the report.</p>	
2014/74/EAC	<p>10. AN UPDATE ON PROJECTS THE ENERGY AND RECYCLING OFFICER IS WORKING ON AT PRESENT</p> <p>Anna Francis gave a presentation on the projects undertaken during the past 9 months covering Energy, Transport and Resources. Highlights included FTC becoming the Winner of the South West Green Energy Awards 2014 in the Most Proactive Public Body category and being voted Council of the Week in the week commencing 8 December 2014 by NALC.</p> <p>Projects included the launch of the Electric Car Club which will provide use of two electric vehicles and one hybrid vehicle, the Thermal Energy programme to be launched in January and the success of the VHS amnesty recycling.</p> <p>The committee noted the report.</p>	
2014/75/EAC	<p>11. AN UPDATE ON THE MARKET PLACE REDEVELOPMENT PROJECT</p> <p>Patrick Moss gave a detailed update on the redevelopment of the Market Place. Following consultation it was decided to pursue a scheme with a step, which would have the advantage that the area would be less steep and make it easier to use for events and easier to use by the disabled. Works are due to start in late Spring 2015.</p> <p>Further details will be brought to EAC in February 2015.</p> <p>Cllr Boyden left the meeting at 8:50 p.m.</p>	PM

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2014/76/EAC	<p>12. FOR DECISION - TO AGREE TO PROGRESS ON THE PROJECT TO IMPROVE STATION APPROACH</p> <p>Patrick Moss explained that there is s.106 funding for this project that must be used by March 2015. The improvements envisaged are a new improved bus stop to enable low floor buses accessibility and a widening of one pavement to provide a safer pedestrian route. The scheme also includes improvements to the signage between the railway station and the town centre. The cycle racks will be improved by First Great Western. Cllr Golinski stated that it would be a much needed to improve the area.</p> <p><i>Recommendations</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Approve the scheme at Appendix 4 2. Secure quotes, permissions and commission the necessary works 3. Report back to EAC in February with an update. <p>Proposed Cllr Elliott, seconded Cllr Golinski, agreed unanimously.</p>	PM
2014/77/EAC	<p>13. TO REVIEW PROPOSALS FOR A CAR PARK STRATEGY AND CONSIDER SPECIFIC PROPOSALS TO IMPROVE THE MARKET YARD</p> <p>A further report will be brought forward on the landscaping proposals for the Market Yard in February and of the Strategy in May 2015. The committee noted the report.</p> <p>Cllr Usher stated that a draft plan had been published by the Frome Cheese and Grain today that would improve a section of car park within the Market Yard and asked that the officers be aware of it.</p>	PM
2014/78/EAC	<p>14. FOR DECISION – WORK PROGRAMME, ORGANISATION CHART, BUDGET AND PRECEPT DEMAND FOR 2015/16</p> <p>The report and appendices were noted by the Committee and no questions were raised.</p> <p><i>Recommendations</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Agree to recommend to Council on the 07 January 2015 the: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Action Plan to 2016 b. Proposed organisational chart c. Budget and precept demand for 2015/16 2) Note the Earmarked and General Reserve for 1 April 2015 <p>Proposed Cllr Burgess, seconded Cllr Usher, agreed by majority.</p>	PWy

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2014/79/EAC	15. The next meeting will be at 7pm on Wednesday 25 February 2015 at the Assembly Rooms.	
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The Chair closed the meeting at 9:10 pm.

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