

# **FROME TOWN COUNCIL**

*making Frome a better place*

To Members of Frome Town Council:

Al O’Kane, Alison Barclay, Cath Puddick, Colin Cobb, Gary Collinson, Heather Wride, Jean Boulton, Kate Bielby, Mel Usher, Nick White, Peter Macfadyen, Pippa Goldfinger, Richard Ackroyd, Sheila Gore, Tim O’Connor, Toby Eliot, Tricia Golinski

## **FROME TOWN COUNCIL MEETING**

**Wednesday 26 August 2015, 7pm**

Assembly Rooms Christchurch St West, Frome, Somerset BA11 1EB

Please contact Rebecca Krzyzosiak ([admin@frometowncouncil.gov.uk](mailto:admin@frometowncouncil.gov.uk)) in advance of the meeting if you are unable to attend

### **AGENDA**

1. Questions and comments from the public
2. Questions and comments from Cllrs
3. Presentation from Steve McIntyre from VAT Consultants
4. Apologies for absence, declaration of members’ interests and minutes from the last two meetings on 22 July 2015 and 12 August 2015
5. For information: Forecast expenditure for coming year compared to the budget
6. For decision: Grants applications for approval
7. For Decision: To appoint an event organiser for the ‘Switch On – European Energy Conference’ 5 March 2016
8. For decision: To deliver new Mary Baily Community Tennis Courts
9. For information: Update on progress on the Frome Town Hall project and for decision: To appoint Cllr Colin Cobb as project sponsor
10. For decision: To approve the Annual Report for 2014/15
11. For information: Outstanding actions
12. For information: Update on ongoing projects
13. The next meeting will be on 23 September 2015 at the (Conference room) Medical Practice Enos Way, Frome, Somerset BA11 2FH

Yours sincerely



Paul Wynne, Town Clerk  
Frome Town Council, 5 Palmer Street, Frome BA11 1DS  
19 August 2015

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## AGENDA

1. **Questions and comments from the public**
2. **Questions and comments from Cllrs**
3. **Presentation from Steve McIntyre, VAT Director from the VAT Consultancy**  
Steve McIntyre will be giving the Council an overview of VAT implications of capital projects in the next few years. He will also be on hand to take questions.
4. **Apologies for absence, declaration of members' interests and minutes from the last two meetings on 22 July 2015 at Appendix 1 and 12 August 2015 at Appendix 2**
5. **For information: Forecast expenditure for coming year compared to the budget**  
Author: Responsible Finance Officer

### *External and Internal audit*

The Council has received the Notice of the Conclusion of the Audit of accounts for the financial year ended 31 March 2015 from the external auditors Grant Thornton. The only comment being that the valuation of the town offices at Palmer Street should continue to be included in the fixed assets at the valuation in 2003 rather than that of 2014. Following Grant Thornton's advice that adjustment was made in the year ended 2014/2015.

In the opinion of both the external and internal auditors the Council presented appropriate accounting records and procedures in accordance with proper practices and met the relevant legislation and regulatory requirements. In accordance with the requirements with Regulation 11 of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2011 this Notice and the Annual Return has been published on the Town Council's website. *Please let me know in advance of the meeting if you want any further information on either audit.*

The Internal Auditors report for the first quarter of the current financial year 1 April 2015 to 30 June 2015 is shown at Appendix 3.

### *Forecast budget as at 31 July 2015 is shown at Appendix 4.*

This section provides Council with a forecast budget at the end of the year and compares this to the agreed budget at the start of the year. We are now one third of the way into the financial year and a reforecast is useful in order to flag up likely changes. Please remember that as we are only one third through the year, these forecasts will change, but at the moment it seems likely that the year-end budget will be £20k under that agreed in January. This translates into a need to use £10k from the General reserve to balance the books rather than the planned £30k. Please do not consider therefore this to be a reason to increase spending as it is too early in the year to do so. But, in summary, so far so good!

The main changes seen in the forecast related to Frome Town Hall. The budgets for 2015/16 were calculated on the assumption that the Council moving to Frome Town Hall. As we are unlikely to move into Frome Town Hall until the next financial year I have increased budgets associated with Palmer Street and reduced or removed those for Frome Town Hall. In January 2016 the first repayment of the Public Works Loan is due. The only feasible income

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in this financial year is from Community Groups use of the Elliot building which will be available for hire from the beginning of September.

Minor forecast savings are highlighted in red at Appendix 4. Conversely, it is likely that extra funding will be needed to support our campaigning work on planning applications but this amount is not known at the moment.

*If you would like further information or to discuss the budgets and reforecast please do contact me in advance of the meeting.*

### *Significant income to note for June and July*

- £1.8k Mendip Tourism Ltd grant funding, which will fund the six new map boards around the town.
- £2.4k Npower electricity generated from C&G building PV panels and sold back to the grid in the first quarter.
- £550k PWLB loan drawn on 1 July for Town Hall purchase and renovation.

### *Significant expenditure to note during June and July*

- £54k Public Works Loan Board, interest and capital repayments on FTC existing PWLB loans.
- £283k including stamp duty, Chubb Bulleid (FTC's solicitors) who dealt with purchase of Frome Town Hall from Somerset County Council.
- £15k Frome College grant funding for Apprentice Co-ordinator.
- £10k Frome Medical Practice grant funding for Well Being Volunteer Co-ordinator.
- £18k Fair Frome annual and final year grant funding.

Details of all payments over £500 reported since the last meeting can be seen at Appendix 5. Councillors are invited to come into the office to 'spot check' and sign BACS payments retrospectively.

### *Reserves/Balance Sheet*

The Balance Sheet shown at Appendix 6. Details deposits in the bank and investments as at 31 July 2015 and 31 March 2015. Total reserves stand at £1.6 million, a combination of General and Earmarked Reserves. The General reserve is temporarily inflated as it includes the PWLB loan of £550k for purchase of Frome Town Hall and the Council Support Tax Grant of £110k.

Expenditure of £50k from Earmarked Reserves in the first four months comprises Youth Research & FE, Fair Frome funding, and Play Equipment part funding at Welshmill Park.

### *Section 106 agreements*

Work continues on finding suitable projects to be funded by S106 monies held by MDC. Specifically the following monies will be utilised shortly:

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- Latona Leisure, former Mendip Lodge Hotel (£38k) to support improvements to the Market Yard and information to tourists.
- Open Spaces enhancement (£44k) from the Medical Practice development on completion of the Cheese Field purchase.
- Two S106 agreements, Former Cuprinol Works (£19k) and Bennetts Gardens (£26k) for public open space enhancement.

There is no progress to report on the Bloor Homes development at Garston Road, although informally it seems likely that there will be an amount available via MDC for off-site enhancing off site open spaces and access to them. This might be used for accessing Rodden Meadow and the Showfield from the estate via a cycle/footbridge across the river.

### *Investments*

As renovation of the Town Hall will commence soon, a short term investment will be considered in line with the Investment Strategy for the PWLB loan, however a 'company decision' prevents some local building societies accepting a local government investment.

## **6. For decision: Grants applications for approval**

Author: Community Projects Officer

### *Summary*

The Grants Advisory Board has met to consider grants applications for the first round of this financial year. The Board's recommendations are noted in the below report and it is recommended that Cllrs agree these.

### *Background/discussion*

The total sum of grants available this year is £65,000 of which:

- £10,000 is for fundraising advice contract (currently delivered by Greenstrands which ends in September 2015)
- £55,000 is project grants (to be allocated over three grant rounds)
- A further £3,878.37 Youth Bank fund (EMR)

In this first round, we are recommending £15,529 are granted to projects grants and a further £2,379.96 in small grants have been agreed by the Mayor and approved by the board. Leaving a remainder of £37,091.04 for the remainder of this year in 2 more grant rounds. In addition there is a 10 year agreement with Harry's Hydro to allocate £8,000 per year to support any shortfall that they incur during the year.

The Grant Advisory Group have discussed the need to review the grants in line with the new strategic plan and are recommending that the Community Grants and Fundraising Support contract be reviewed in September. This may mean that the existing contract with Greenstrands comes to an end before the decision about the type of fundraising support and advice required by local community groups is made. The review will consider the types of support local community groups require to increase their capacity to deliver activities and

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services in Frome. At this stage it seems likely that a contract to provide fundraising advice to local community groups will continue.

**Applications Community Grants propose the following applications be approved in Round 1 of the 2015/16:**

Organisation	Project name	Amount requested	Amount recommended
The Pod	The Pod Youth Club and Young Carers Project	£2,969.00	£2,969.00
Edventure Frome	Edventure school for community enterprise workshop programme	£3,000.00	£3,000.00
YMCA	Youth Club open sessions at Frome Youth and Community Centre	£3,000.00	£3,000.00
Alzheimer's society	Frome Memory Café	£2,999.00	£1,000.00
Simon King Wildlife Project	Learn from Nature	£3,000.00	£3,000.00
Positive Action on Cancer	Charity shop with a difference	£2,560.00	£2,560.00
<b>Total:</b>			<b>£15529</b>

**Small grants approved by the Mayor for ratification**

Frome Men's Shed	First Aid Training for Frome Men's Shed participant	£300.00	£300.00
Frome Gateway Club	Coach Trip to Exmouth including bowling	£300.00	£300.00
Black Swan Arts	The Mayor's Chain Exhibition	£300.00	£300.00

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Frome Twinning Association	Quadripartite visit to Chateau Gontier, France	£300.00	£300.00
Health Connections Mendip on behalf of the COPD support group	Frome and District COPD support group	£300.00	£300.00
Frome Canoe Club	Young people into canoe slalom	£279.96	£279.96
Wessex MS therapy	Massage and Reflexology Fund	£300.00	£300.00
YPN - Youth Production Service	YPN Frome	£300.00	£300.00

**Total £2,379.96**

White Horse Decorative & Fine Arts Society	Lecture Costs	300	0
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### Community Grants recommended for rejection in round 1 2015/16:

Organisation	Project name	Amount requested		Reason for rejection
Frome Memorial Theatre Trust	New tables and chairs for the assembly rooms	£2,500.00	0	The funding is to support commercial enterprise and therefore does not meet our criteria.
Frome Cricket Club	Pavilion Improvements Project - new tables and chairs	£3,000.00	0	The funding requested is to support commercial enterprise. We would be happy to discuss this further and look at ways that future projects may better meet our funding criteria.
Frome Artist Printmakers	Providing excellence in printmaking	£2,200.00	0	We would welcome a future application which demonstrates

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	through education and training			partnership working and a clearer working model for the project.
Relate Mid Wiltshire	Bursary fund to support Frome residents	£575.00	0	There is not significant benefit to Frome residents.
Mendip Community Transport	Mendip Community Transport	£3,000.00	0	There is not sufficient evidence of the benefit for Frome residents we would welcome a future application specific to Frome rather than generic, with an emphasis on partnership working.
Bristol Avon Rivers Trust	HIPPO - Habitat Improves Predator Proofing Opportunities	£3,000.00	0	Links with local organisations do not appear to have been made, or with the river corridor strategy.
Edventure Frome	Edventure - 8 month training programme in community enterprise	£3,000.00	0	We would like to know more about the aims and outcomes of the project with a more formed idea. We would also like to see more evidence of partnership working.

### *Recommendation*

1. Agree the recommendations of the Grants Advisory Board above
2. Agree that the Grant Advisory Group will lead a review of the Community Grants and
3. Fundraising support contract and will report back to Council in October 2015 their findings.

## **7. For Decision: To appoint an event organiser for the ‘Switch On – European Energy Conference’ 5 March 2016**

Author: Energy and Recycling Officer

### *Summary*

Frome Town Council, the Frome Twinning Association along with our twin towns has secured a potential funding pot of 150,000 euros (of which 37,500 euros will come to Frome) from the European Union to fund four thematic networking events – one in each twin town. The Frome event is planned for 5 March. This report seeks approval to let a contract to organise the event in Frome utilising the funding pot for the EU.

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## *Background*

There has been one event held in Chateau Gontier, the next will be in Murrhardt in the Autumn, Frome's event will be on 5 March and Rabka's will be held early next Summer.

This funding stream is part of a new approach to Twinning and aims to bring together experts and decision-makers from all four twin towns to share knowledge and best practice. The focus of the Frome event is on renewable energy and how we can create low carbon towns and will take place in March 2016.

## *The proposal*

We would like to recruit an event manager on a contract basis as soon as possible to help organise and co-ordinate the visit and conference. In order to receive the full funding from the EU we need to have a minimum of 251 participants, with 30% (or a minimum of 76) visitors from the participating towns. As well as the conference, the funding needs to cover all accommodation, food and other entertainment (such as trips to local renewable energy projects). A small amount (around £2000) will need to be set aside to fund participation in the other town's events. It will be the event organiser's responsibility to ensure that funding targets are met and that the project stays in budget.

This contract will be funded from the EU grant and will have no permanent budgetary impact on FTC. However, the grant will be awarded after all four events and so temporary funding will be required from FTC until the grant is received when costs will be re-couped by FTC. There is a risk that the full amount of the grant will not be awarded if visitor targets are not met but we are confident that we will meet these targets and it is proposed that Council should accept the proposal.

The recruitment process and the management of the contract will be the responsibility of Anna Francis in consultation with the proposed project sponsor Pippa Goldfinger.

## *Recommendations*

1. Appoint Pippa Goldfinger as the project sponsor
2. Approve the recruitment of an event organiser on a contract basis at an appropriate rate.
3. Delegate the recruitment and management of the contract to Anna Francis in consultation with Pippa Goldfinger.

## **8. For Decision: To deliver new Mary Baily Community Tennis Courts**

Author: Environment Manager

## *Summary*

Frome Town Council (FTC) is working in partnership with the Frome Selwood Tennis Club (FSTC) to construct and then run three new tennis courts on the Mary Baily Playing Field as part of the implementation of the Victoria Park Management Plan. The courts will be adjacent to the existing MUGA.



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The project will simultaneously see the three existing tennis courts in Victoria Park broken up and removed. This entire area will then be reinstated to grass and precede the next phase of implementing the Management Plan next year.

Following construction, the new courts will be run and maintained by FSTC in line with a management agreement. There will be provision for the public to hire the new courts throughout the week, including weekends, on a 'Pay & Play' basis.

Between April and July FSTC will use one of the new courts on Monday and Wednesday evenings – leaving two courts for public hire. Again between April and July, FSTC will use all three new courts on Tuesday and Thursday evenings. This arrangement was approved by Council in October 2013.

### *Background*

The proposal to jointly undertake this project was approved by the Town Council's Internal Affairs Committee on Wednesday 9 October 2013. This project has been steadily moved forward since this date, with FSTC earmarking or successfully applying for much of the funding needed for the new courts. FSTC's contribution to this project should be noted. With tenders now received and reviewed, we are looking at let this contract and start the construction works over the winter period.

Assuming regular and reasonable progress, the courts will be open to the public before next spring.

### *Finances*

The total cost of the project is going to be £135,000. This figure includes a contingency sum; an allowance to break-up then reinstate the existing courts in Victoria Park; and the implementation of an online booking system for the courts that will be managed by the tennis club. The table below shows the sources of funding. As Mary Baily Playing Field is legally owned by Fields in Trust the most appropriate way to fund the project is via the Town Council, hence the loan and grants will be paid directly to FTC.

FTC has £9,037 in an EMR for this project	£9,037
FSTC has successfully applied to the Lawn Tennis Association (LTA) for a £10,000 grant. By agreement, this will be paid directly to FTC	£10,000
FSTC has also successfully applied to the LTA for an interest free (0%) loan of £10,000. This will be paid directly to FTC and will be repayable by FTC	£10,000
FSTC has successfully applied to Sport England for a £75,000 'Inspired Facilities' grant. This will be paid directly to FTC	£75,000
FSTC has £35,000 in earmarked reserves and grants to meet the balance of the project	£31,222
<b>Total</b>	<b>£135,259</b>

### *Notes*

FTC will be responsible for paying back the LTA loan over a 10 year period: £1,000 per year

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This loan repayment will be reflected as a unique line in annual budgets starting with 2016/2017's budget. The £1,000 repayment payable this financial year will come from existing budgets

## *Recommendations*

1. Note the current stage of the project
2. Agree the finances, including FTC's ongoing repayment of the £10,000 LTA loan
3. Approve progress to the construction phase and delegate to the Environment Manager to deliver the project
4. Note the tennis club's contributions to the project

## **9. For information: Update on progress on the Frome Town Hall project and for decision: To appoint Cllr Colin Cobb as project sponsor**

Author: Town Clerk

### *Summary*

In March 2015, Council approved the Design Brief and authorised the Clerk in consultation with the Leader to appoint a Lead Designer and Quantity Surveyor (QS) in order to take forward the design process to a detailed stage with full costings. This report provides an update of the project.

### *Project Update and next steps*

In April we appointed NVB Architects as the Lead Designer and HMW as the QS. Over the past month, the QS and heating, lighting, and IT engineers have been working on detailed costings that will be essential for the building to operate. Once we have costings we will be clear about the costs of dealing with essential items such as damp, structural works, upgrading the wiring, heating and meeting the needs of fire and security. Installing a ramp along the front of the building so that everyone can access it from the door is feasible and is likely to need planning permission. This should not pose any problems. The Elliot Building is now useable and will be available for rent by community groups from the beginning of September.

We have been working with CAB and Positive Action on Cancer (likely to be the two major tenants), on a design that will meet the specification in the Design Brief. Designing the project has taken longer than initially expected partly in order to make sure we have it right before we start work on site but also because we have been exploring a phased approach to the design due to the confines of the budget. Even so, at this stage we are still expecting the first phase of the project to be completed by early summer.

It is becoming clear that whatever approach we take to phasing, a two storey extension will be required for fire regulation purposes. The question we are grappling with is the extent of this extension. The minimum we need to do is a small two storey corridor to the rear of the building housing fire stairs, the maximum is a larger extension that will enable us to meet fully the Design Brief and avoid the need to phase the project. This will be cheaper in the long run but will require a larger budget allocation up front.

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As a result, we are planning to bring to Council in September at least two fully costed options and Council will need to decide whether to phase the project as described above or identify additional funds and build a large extension and complete the Brief in one phase. The RFO and I are exploring whether it is possible to access additional budgets.

### *Project Sponsor*

Since the Council elections, the Leader has changed from Mel Usher to Peter Macfadyen. In addition, Colin Cobb was elected as a Cllr. He is a practicing architect and interested in the project. As a result I have kept all three included in ongoing discussions. Colin has been taking more a central role and I propose he is appointed him as project sponsor.

### *Recommendation*

Appoint Colin Cobb as project sponsor.

**10. For Decision: To approve the Annual Report 2014/15 at Appendix 7**

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## 11. For information: Outstanding Actions

Summary of Resolution	Minute number	Meeting date	Responsibility	Progress Report	Target Date
Riverside Project (Henley Way/Welshmill Lane)	2014/38	25/06/2014	Chris Stringer	Following a public vote the new path has been named - The Otherside – and an official opening and naming on 5 August. FTC is meeting with interested groups to draw up a Management & Improvement Plan for the Roundhouse.	
The Showfield	2014/38	25/06/2014	Paul Wynne	We're waiting on the final, legal proceedings. FTC has re-publicised the transfer and is developing the previous public consultations to identify where and how to invest in the site. As part of this we are organising community consultation days to take place as soon as the transfer has happened. Initial discussions about a spring celebration event are also taking shape.	
Police Station				The deadline for submission of representations to the Planning Inspector was 12 August, we have submitted our representations together with an additional transport assessment which concludes that; there is evidence that significant local traffic issues have not been investigated, and sets out the evidence to support this. It has also been confirmed that the Vacant Building credit has now been withdrawn. However, Newland Homes are still claiming that it is not viable to provide any affordable housing and we have also submitted a statement setting out why this should not be allowed. Copies of	

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				the submission documents are available from Jane Llewellyn Planning and Development Officer.	
Freehold transfer of the Tower View Open Space along with an appropriate dowry	2014/70	17/12/2014	Chris Stringer	We've prepared a document in support of the proposed transfer, answering MDC's questions. The transfer is set to be discussed at an upcoming CAMG meeting – possibly in September.	
Freehold transfer Packsaddle Way/Pedlars Grove and Chapman's Close open spaces with dowry	2014/71	17/12/2014	Chris Stringer	As with Tower View, we have prepared a document in support of the proposed transfer – again answering MDC's questions. The transfer is likely to be discussed at the same meeting as Tower View.	
Key					
				Overdue	
				On-going (on schedule)	
				Upcoming item	

12. For information: Update on ongoing projects At Appendix 8

13. The next meeting will be on 23 September 2015 at 7pm at the (Conference room) Medical Practice Enos Way, Frome, Somerset BA11 2FH