

FROME TOWN COUNCIL

making Frome a better place

Minutes of the meeting of Frome Town Council

Wednesday 23 September 2015 at 7pm
Frome Medical Practice Enos Way, Frome, Somerset BA11 2FH

Present:

Councillors: Al O’Kane, Alison Barclay, Colin Cobb, Gary Collinson, Jean Boulton, Kate Bielby, Mel Usher, Peter Macfadyen, Pippa Goldfinger, Richard Ackroyd, Sheila Gore, Toby Eliot, Nick White

In attendance:

Susannah Walker (Frome, Glastonbury and Bruton Calais Aid group), John Careswell and Dinah Bargett (Syrian Refugees Support Group), Hugh Deed (Shelter Box), District Cllrs Des Harris, Adam Boyden and Mike Rideout, Charles Wood Vision for Frome, Caroline Wood (Frome Standard), 2 PCSOs

Paul Wynne (Town Clerk), Rebecca Krzyzosiak (Administration Officer), Chris Stringer (Environmental Manager), Kate Hellard (Community Projects Officer), Peter Wheelhouse (Economic Development & Regeneration Manager), Michael Gerrard (Town Ranger), Mark Brookes (Town Centre Community Coordinator), Ruth Knagg (Community Projects Officer for Outside services).

30 members of the public

Minute Ref	Agenda Item	Action
2015/74/FC	<p>1. Questions and Comments from the public</p> <p>Dave Clark of Frack Free Frome reported he had attended a meeting regarding the recent Fracking Licences in Somerset, he advised that new licenses were very close to Frome. He asked if the Council would help promote the group’s work and campaign by confirming that Frome was a “Frack Free Town” on signs when entering the town.</p> <p>The Town Clerk said the last Council Administration did pass a motion to say Frome was a ‘Frack Free Town”, however Cllrs needed to have a view on it, and bring back to a future meeting for discussion once the implications were understood.</p> <p>Gill Fone highlighted concerns for a tree planted by Mendip to commemorate the Queen’s Diamond Jubilee, in the cattle market car park. This was a second tree due to the previous one perishing. She also asked if FTC knew where the plaque was for this tree.</p> <p>The Town Clerk and Cllr Goldfinger pointed out this was a Mendip District Council responsibility, but suggested that FTC could liaise with MDC to replace the tree and have the Town Rangers maintain it.</p>	<p>PWY</p> <p>PWY</p>

FROME TOWN COUNCIL

making Frome a better place

	<p>Juliet Solomon advised that there was a formal consultation on fracking and asked if the Council would formally participate in the consultation; Peter Macfadyen said he would ensure a report came to the next meeting.</p>	PWy
	<p>2. Questions and Comments from Cllrs District Cllr Des Harris gave an update about Section 106 agreements that were outstanding at MDC (5 were currently outstanding).</p> <p>He reported that there was delay with one pertaining to a Bloor Homes development as the park that was going to be built on an area of land now had to be reviewed due to it being on top of a water tank. An alternative agreement will be drawn up for a different type of public amenity.</p> <p>Other S106s were to do with more or less the same thing with public spaces and tourism. He suggested that Frome Town Council needed to come up with imaginative ideas for S106 agreements otherwise the District Council would sit on the money.</p>	PWy
	<p>District Cllr Adam Boyden arrived 7.12pm. He advised that MDC had the Local Plan Part II out and it would be until December. A minimum of 348 houses were planned in the period. It would also review which open spaces should be protected but not all local land was covered, for example the Old Showfield. He said FTC and other local community groups may wish to make a response.</p>	JL
	<p>He said that a Fracking consultation on habitats runs out on 30 September, and that Frome Leisure centre will close for 3 months in October. He also said that Somerset Rivers Authority had asked ministers for legal powers to raise funds by itself, which could result in a 1% rise in Council Tax in future years.</p>	
	<p>He welcomed the transfer of the Old Showfield and hoped FTC would consult local people again about what it is they wanted in regards to the land. He said that other transfers between MDC and FTC were being looked at by Mendip on 2 November and he was optimistic these would go through. He reminded the Council that Local groups had until 16 October to apply for MDC grants. He also advised that MDC had held a meeting with regards to the refugee crisis taking place, and that the District Council now had more staff in its enforcement department to deal with fly-tipping, fly-grazing and planning.</p>	
	<p>Chairs of the FTC panels and groups each gave an update:</p> <p>Cllr Richard Ackroyd explained to the meeting the idea behind October Watch.</p>	

FROME TOWN COUNCIL

making Frome a better place

	<p>He said that it was not just the bad, but good examples that people could report and FTC wanted to acknowledge local champions who make a difference to the town and their neighbourhoods. The public could get in touch via social media as well as a designated email address for the campaign keepfromeclean@frometowncouncil.gov.uk</p> <p>The next Keep Frome Clean Panel meeting would be 28 September at 6pm at the Elliot Building behind the Frome Town Hall.</p> <p>Cllr Pippa Goldfinger of the Planning Advisory Group stated that the Southfield farm application had been rejected by MDC, and the rejection echoed a lot of recommendations made by FTC - which was promising.</p> <p>Cllr Toby Eliot Chair of the Corporate Strategy Panel said it was progressing, and was taking a detailed look at the big focus of the Council over the next 4 years.</p> <p>Cllr Ali Barclay updated the meeting on the recent Wellbeing Panel meeting and thanked everyone who came along. Residents and organisations at the meeting had successfully identified gaps in services. She said that the next meeting would be 1 October at 3.30pm, and future meetings would be at differing times to try to accommodate a range of schedules for people to attend.</p> <p>Cllr Mel Usher, Chair of the Town Centre Panel said the panel meetings had been highly successful in identifying areas of improvement and working with the local community and businesses in the town. He said that the next meeting would feature many presentations – of which 4 out of the 5 were from local businesses and individuals, so the group was being steered by local people not just Cllrs. He highlighted that the panel would soon be able to report its findings and projects for the town as the group had worked well.</p> <p>Cllr Gary Collinson Chair of the Sports and Leisure Panel said that at the last meeting they had revisited work about the needs and requirements for leisure provision in the town. He said the situation was broadly the same, but an audit of used and not used venues was to be carried out which would help to identify gaps in the town’s facilities.</p>	
2015/75/FC	<p>3. A discussion on the Syrian and Calais crisis – what the town is broadly doing.</p> <p>Presentations were given by John Careswell, Hugh Deed and Susan Walker.</p> <p>John Careswell described the work that he had been involved in. He highlighted that it was widely reported over 4 million people had made the difficult decision to flee their war-torn country.</p>	

FROME TOWN COUNCIL

making Frome a better place

He recognised there are formal systems currently in place and he wanted to engage and work in partnership with local authorities. It was not a group working alone, but working with others.

He thanked MDC and the County Council for their input and response to the crisis. He also thanked local MP David Warburton and Phillip Ham of MDC for their sympathetic actions in response to the crisis. He said that he wanted to link with FTC so that Frome could present itself as a town that welcomed refugees.

John said he was currently creating a database of people/organisations who wanted to help. It was his plan to share this information with other towns and other working-groups. He intended to submit a full proposal for Frome Town Council to consider at the next meeting.

Hugh Deed said he was not representing a group but a charity ShelterBox which had been established in 2000. The charity had been based in Syria for more than 4 years now. He explained that ShelterBox provides emergency shelter and vital supplies to support communities around the world. The Mayor thanked John and Hugh for their presentations.

Susanna Walker said that the group she was representing had grown out of Facebook: it was the Frome, Glastonbury and Bruton Calais Aid group. Their undertaking was to be able to send a convoy of aid for refugees direct to Calais. The group were in constant contact with Calais, so they were aware of what amenities were needed, and they had created packs of toiletries, clothes and food.

She said that the premises that the Town Council had made available meant that they could be very organised and efficient in their efforts. The Mayor thanked her for her talk.

Cllr Peter Macfadyen said that he has had experience of various disasters through his own professional work and personal experience. He said that as well as a short-term view it was crucial to take a longer perspective—on issues like mental health, contact with fellow country men/women and support for cultural needs. At times this might mean that clusters of refugees might be the best solution.

Cllr Jean Boulton said it was very moving to hear about the initiatives going on in Frome.

Cllr Mel Usher proposed the Council raise a 'show of hands' in support for this work informally. Seconded by Ali Barclay, a unanimous show of hands was raised.

The Mayor said she was personally impressed with the key coordination and reactions from residents and groups.

FROME TOWN COUNCIL

making Frome a better place

	The meeting was formerly opened at 7.51pm.	
2015/76/FC	<p>4a. Apologies for absence Received from Town Cllrs Golinski, Wride, Puddick, O'Connor. District Cllr Beale, and County Cllr Oliver</p>	
2015/77/FC	<p>4b. Declaration of members' interests Nothing was declared.</p>	
2015/78/FC	<p>4c. Minutes from the last meeting on 26 August 2015 were signed as a true record of the last meeting. Proposed Cllr Collinson, seconded Cllr Ackroyd, agreed majority.</p>	
2015/79/FC	<p>5. For decision: To agree a policy on horse-grazing on Town Council land</p> <p>The Environment Manager gave a brief summary about the report. He said it was a good time for the Council to be considering it, as horses had been grazing on Rodden meadow for much of the summer, there was also new legislation on this matter.</p> <p>Cllr Sheila Gore asked why fly-grazing was increasing. The Environment Manager advised that anecdotal evidence suggested there were more horses than responsible horse-owners. He also said that these horses are not of the highest monetary value so some had been abandoned. It was unlikely the Council could do any one thing to prevent this from taking place.</p> <p>Cllr Colin Cobb asked if there were any practical methods to stop horses from getting onto the land in the first place. Chris advised that fly-grazing was an illegal activity and so the method used to access land was also often illegal. Pippa Goldfinger noted how The Dippy fences had previously been removed to graze horses on the land.</p> <p>A local resident and dog walker pleaded that the horses be removed as her dog roles in horse faeces.</p> <p>Cllr Peter Macfadyen responded saying that the Council had entered into talks with horse owners as well as the public through meetings of informal consultation over the summer with Simon Keyes. He thanked Chris and Simon Keyes for their hard work in attempting to keep an open dialogue.</p> <p>Cllr Mel Usher said he accepted what Cllr Macfadyen was saying but wanted to make an amendment to the recommendations:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Deal with instances and situations of fly-grazing and abandonment on an individual basis as they arise with actions coordinated by the Environment Manager. 	

FROME TOWN COUNCIL

making Frome a better place

	<p>2. <u>Agree that seizing a horse or horses be considered, especially for persistent offenders – and that such an action must be agreed by the Town Clerk in consultation with the Leader of the Council, especially when that action is likely to be followed by euthanasia.</u></p> <p>3. Establish a fly-grazing webpage and use on site signage to inform the public of what FTC will do when fly-grazing occurs.</p> <p>Proposed Cllr Macfadyen, seconded Cllr Ackroyd, agreed unanimously.</p>	
2015/80/FC	<p>6. For decision: To agree to commission a Town Digital Hub</p> <p>Cllr Peter Macfadyen said that this project had been discussed in depth with Keith Harrison-Broninski and himself and relevant Cllrs and staff. He said that Keith Harrison-Broninski had a clear understanding of what was needed from the project, and that it was brought forward to Council for decision as the Council’s Financial Regulation 14.6 states that for any contract over £5,000, quotes should be invited from a minimum of three suppliers. However because Keith Harrison-Broninski had a unique product in this case an exemption could be passed under Financial Regulation 14.4.</p> <p>Cllr Pippa Goldfinger said she couldn’t understand how it worked and wanted an example of the use of the digital hub; Peter Macfadyen said that Keith had done work with NHS projects and the software could be picked up and repeated in other places. That fundamentally it helped users to see what others were doing in the vicinity. It would be useful in Frome as there are many groups who were invisible to one another.</p> <p>Cllr Nick White said he questioned if this was actually working? That best practice in the NHS was not necessarily to share information.</p> <p>Cllr Toby Eliot said that from his understanding, the software could work really well, and the site could be easily used, and actions tracked. This would enable good linkages to be made.</p> <p>Cllr Colin Cobb said he could see a need being met, and was positive £5000 was a small sum of money for such a product, but he felt that Cllrs needed a more thorough explanation on which to base a decision.</p> <p>Cllr Nick White said it sounded like this was a pioneering project for FTC and if the Council was part of its development it should share financially in its future/success.</p> <p>Cllr Toby Elliott said that yes the Council would have control over how it is developed.</p> <p>The Recommendation was: Commission Keith Harrison- Broninski to establish the Town Digital Hub,</p>	

FROME TOWN COUNCIL
making Frome a better place

	<p>and minute that this is justified as an exemption to the Financial Regulation 14.5.</p> <p>Proposed Cllr Elliot, seconded Cllr Barclay, agreed majority. Cllrs O’Kane and Usher abstained. Cllrs Ackroyd, Bielby and White voted against the recommendation.</p> <p>Cllr Collinson left at 8.28pm.</p>	
2015/81/FC	<p>7. For decision: An update on Dog Control Orders eleven months on and a proposal to consult a on DCO on The Showfield</p> <p>The Environment Manager went through the report.</p> <p>Margaret Meryl brought up that she had seen dogs being walked in Mary Baily playing field, and were often running loose on a daily basis. In her opinion the signs for the DCOs were not big enough. She felt that DCOs orders had not improved the situation and felt that the park was often ruined by dog owners not following DCOs.</p> <p>Nick White answered and said that irresponsible dog owners would be irresponsible regardless of how big the signs were relating to the DCOs. Michael Gerrard, Frome Town Ranger said that the staff were embarking on training to enable them to give out DCOs.</p> <p>The recommendations were:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Continue with DCOs where they are currently in place. 2. Delegate responsibility to the Environment Manager to start consultation on a DCO for the Showfield, reporting back to Council with a recommended DCO in due course. 3. In consulting on a DCO for the Showfield, staff take the opportunity to re-publicise and promote the existing Orders. <p>Proposed Cllr Cobb, seconded Cllr Macfadyen, agreed unanimously.</p>	
2015/82/FC	<p>8. For decision: Town Centre floral displays 2016</p> <p>The Environment Manager talked through the report.</p> <p>A discussion ensued on the siting, and type of floral discussions followed including possible sponsorship.</p> <p>The Environment Manager said that FTC were aiming for a balance in the town centre, and for the open spaces FTC owned. He advised that FTC would be working with community groups when planning the floral displays for 2016.</p>	PWy

FROME TOWN COUNCIL

making Frome a better place

	<p>The Mayor said that there would be a different strategy of zones through the town, and that colour would be taken into consideration - the Council were now moving forward with the floral displays.</p> <p>The recommendations were:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Delegate responsibility to the Environment Manager to involve the wider community in the town's floral displays. 2. Delegate responsibility to the Environment Manager to draw up plans for next year's florals; and to propose next year's budget in due course. <p>Proposed Cllr Goldfinger, seconded Cllr Gore, agreed unanimously.</p>	
2015/83/FC	<p>9. For information and decision: Fundraising Support and Community Grants</p> <p>The Town Clerk presented the report to Council, discussion and debate ensued.</p> <p>Sue Klepper from Frome Community Education said the group had greatly benefited from the current provider Greenstrand, and that a move to change the current way of running things could ruin a lot of gain for the community.</p> <p>The Town Clerk said that the Council would want to keep Greenstrand on board, on an ad hoc basis depending on demand, as the organisation didn't quite cover all aspects. There was an identifiable gap in the Council's current provision for community groups and the recommendation was proposing to fill this.</p> <p>Cllr Mel Usher said that the current contract is flexible and acts as a 'one stop shop' and is looked at by other Councils as a model.</p> <p>He highlighted that he believed the service was diverse and multi-layered. He said FTC were introducing a more complex pathway for community groups to access help or grants by changing current arrangements.</p> <p>Cllr Mel Usher moved to amend the recommendation.</p> <p>A discussion on the voluntary sector and grant provision in town followed.</p> <p>Cllr Peter Macfadyen said that there are different views from different people regarding the current contract. He said it was discussed at the Grants Advisory Group, and feedback was that groups did not get all they wanted through one individual contractor. He said the current contract had worked very well so far, but after talking to staff there needed to be more flexibility to meet the current demand out there.</p>	

FROME TOWN COUNCIL

making Frome a better place

	<p>Ruth Knagg CPO said that many smaller groups needed help to advise trustees or needed safeguarding or first training before they even considered being 'grant ready'.</p> <p>Cllr Toby Elliott said an ad hoc approach worried him and sounded like it could be a drain on time and resources. It appeared as if there was an additional need that had been identified, so rather than changing how things are being implemented, this need be identified separately.</p> <p>Cllr Pippa Goldfinger said if things aren't broke, then don't fix it. She said smaller groups might need other support, but would rather keep the current contract and provide something else in addition if needed, she said it seemed more straightforward that way and there could be opportunity to share training etc.</p> <p>Cllr Colin Cobb asked the staff and Council to think about how to present things in papers. On two occasions in this agenda Cllrs didn't know what they were being asked to agree on, he said, and thus discussion was too long.</p> <p>In place of recommendations 1 and 2, it was agreed:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That a contract be issued to GreenStrand for the remaining 6 months of this financial year, to deliver the same service as they have offered for the last 3 years. 2. Before April 2016 the Greenstarnd contract be re-tendered although before that process, and during the budget preparation, thought be given to increasing the provision of advice to the voluntary sector where gaps needed to be filled. <p>Proposed Cllr Usher, seconded Cllr Elliott, agreed by majority.</p> <p>The Council then considered a grant application previously agreed by the Grants Working Group.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Approve the above Youth Bank Application for £1,000. <p>Proposed Cllr Goldfinger, seconded Cllr Cobb, agreed by majority.</p>	
2015/84/FC	<p>10. For information: Planned Winter and Spring works on Town Council land</p> <p>The Environment Manager summarised the planned winter and spring works on the Town Council estates.</p> <p>Cllr Mel Usher said he was happy with the proposed works and noted that the Council had been waiting for 4 years for such a plan.</p>	

FROME TOWN COUNCIL

making Frome a better place

	<p>Cllr Jean Boulton asked that the idea of spring bulbs be widened into autumn planting, especially on North Parade as this part of the plan had a lot of impact visually by removing planting beds.</p> <p>A resident from near the Foundry Barton site asked about the proposed plans for this piece of land – and summarised the issues residents had faced previously with anti-social behaviour in this particular area. She said if it wasn't for the local residents' consistent campaigning FTC wouldn't have acquired the land this year. She advised that historically it had not been a light-hearted decision for the District Council and Police to close the play area to the public. She said she felt that the Council had to take local residents' concerns seriously with regards to feedback and recent consultation. She said that plans had to be drawn up with a true understanding of what had been issues in the past, and then the Council and others could make an informed decision about what to do with the site.</p> <p>Cllr Mel Usher advised that Chris Stringer is bringing a report to Council for the next meeting, he said residents' who had issue with the site needed to make it clear what they wanted - not just complain about what the Council were coming up with, they needed to liaise with Chris directly on this, and that the Council would bear in mind the site's history.</p> <p>Gill Fone commented on the Foundry Barton site in regards to the recent works the Town Rangers had carried out; she said the area had been tidied up and looked very nice, and wished to highlight this.</p>	CS
2015/85/FC	<p>11. For information: Outstanding actions Cllrs noted the report.</p>	
2015/86/FC	<p>12. For information: Update on ongoing projects Cllrs noted the report.</p>	
2015/87/FC	<p>13. Health and Safety update The Town Clerk advised that there was nothing to report.</p>	
2015/88/FC	<p>14. Confidential staff item Cllrs met in confidential session to decide on a number of staff-related issues and the public and the press were asked to leave. A confidential report was noted and decision made.</p> <p>Proposed Cllr Ackroyd, seconded Cllr Barclay, agreed unanimously.</p>	PWh
2015/89/FC	<p>13. The next meeting will be 28 October at 7pm at the Elliot Building, (to the rear of Frome Town Hall), Christchurch St West BA11 1EF</p>	

FROME TOWN COUNCIL
making Frome a better place

The meeting was closed at 9.20pm.

DRAFT