

FROME TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of Frome Town Council

Wednesday 24 January 2018 at 7pm

Frome Town Hall, Christchurch Street West, Frome BA11 1EB

Present:

Councillors: Richard Ackroyd, Kate Bielby, Jean Boulton, Colin Cobb, Gary Collinson, Toby Eliot, Tricia Golinski, Sheila Gore, Peter Macfadyen, Mel Usher, Nick White, Heather Wride

In attendance:

Martin Dimery (Frome Festival and SCC Cllr), John Clarke (SCC Cllr), Bob Ashford (Fair Frome), Shane Collins (MDC Cllr), Des Harris (MDC Cllr), Stina Falle (MDC Cllr), James Somper (Frome Standard), Paul Wynne (Town Clerk), Peter Wheelhouse (Economic Development and Regeneration Manager and Deputy Town Clerk), Kate Hellard (Community Project Officer), Clementine Conlon Spears (Communications and Marketing Assistant), Laura Flaherty (Executive Assistant to the Town Clerk and Mayor)

Approx. 40 members of the public

Minute Ref	Agenda Item	Action
2018/1/FC	<p>The meeting started at 7.02pm</p> <p>1a. Apologies for absence Received from Ali Barclay, Pippa Goldfinger, Al O’Kane, Cath Puddick</p> <p>1b. Declaration of members’ interests Nick White and Mel Usher declared non-pecuniary interests in item 6. Mel Usher also declared a non-pecuniary interest in item 3.</p> <p>1c. Minutes from the last meeting on 13 December 2017 Peter Wheelhouse noted that the parking restrictions in King Street had been lifted.</p> <p>The minutes of the Frome Town Council meeting held on 13 December 2017 were approved as a true record of the meeting and signed by the Chair.</p> <p>Proposed by Kate Bielby, seconded by Tricia Golinski, agreed unanimously.</p>	
2018/2/FC	<p>2. Questions and comments from the public and Cllrs Richard Ackroyd noted that the next meeting of the Trinity community group would be on 15 February at 7.30pm at the Griffin.</p> <p>Shane Collins noted that MDC had agreed to ban the use of single use plastic, Divest Somerset had met to discuss how to persuade SCC to divest pension investments from fossil fuels and the planning</p>	

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	<p>application for a development at The Retreat had been resubmitted for consideration by MDC planning board.</p> <p>Local resident Tim Adams left a letter for Cllrs asking them to object to a planning application by Aster Homes to build 4 new houses behind St John’s Road. He was concerned about the removal of vital parking spaces.</p> <p>Gill Fone asked if the Earmarked Reserve for Foundry Barton had been spent and would any unspent amounts still be available in 2018/19. Richard Ackroyd explained any unspent money would remain in the EMR and be available in the new financial year.</p> <p>Jim Boulter asked if there were any penalty clauses in the contract for overrunning at Boyle Cross. Peter Wheelhouse explained that the delays were due to getting utilities connected which was not the fault of the contractor. Jim also asked if it was still planned to narrow the pavements to allow for the buses to pull off the road. Peter explained that he would be bringing proposals for further remodeling to a future Council meeting. He noted it was a possibility that the bays could be adjusted to make traffic freer flowing.</p> <p>Paul Wynne summarised an update from MDC Cllr Adam Boyden: until 10 February there would be a consultation on whether to extend the closure of Gypsy Lane. The leisure centre would be having a customer event on 31 January.</p> <p>John Clarke noted that SCC had started a consultation on library services.</p>	
<p>2018/3/FC</p>	<p>3. For information - Multi Year Agreements with Fair Frome and Frome Festival</p> <p>Martin Dimery, Director of Frome Festival gave a short presentation. He explained the Festival was a community festival, initiated by the community and with headline acts.</p> <p>In 2017 there were 175 events plus 8 major exhibitions. There were 123 ticketed events, 46 were free, 12 were aimed at children and there were 28 workshops. The Festival also provided insurance cover for the Children’s Festival.</p> <p>Due to the volume and variety of events, the Festival relies heavily on the help of over 100 volunteers.</p> <p>In 2017 they had a £4k - £5k surplus which will provide funds to refurbish their office and invest in the IT system.</p> <p>Martin explained that the 2018 theme will celebrate Mary Shelley’s Frankenstein. As a way of trying to attract new audiences including young people, they had commissioned Jo Hyde to produce an</p>	

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	<p>interactive colour projector room where movements will create specific colour. Martin noted that additional fundraising was ongoing.</p> <p>Sheila Gore asked what the grant from FTC meant to the Festival. Martin said it enabled them to plan ahead and invest in larger installations like the Jo Hyde one.</p> <p>Nick White commented that there was a perception in Frome that the Food Festival had less local stalls. Martin explained that in 2017 13 out of 15 stalls were run by local traders. Due to new health and safety regulations some traders decided not to take part. He stressed they were not being turned away.</p> <p>A member of public noted that there were not enough of the tunnel tours. Martin said they wanted to do more but the number was always limited. Richard Ackroyd, a member of the tunnels group, noted there was a Facebook page where they would be announcing a few extra dates soon. Richard noted tours relied on private landowners giving permission some of which are in people's front gardens.</p> <p>Peter Macfadyen asked if there was a way of encouraging no single use plastic at the Food Festival. Martin explained Tracy Rawlings was in contact with Anna Francis to see how this could be achieved.</p> <p>Bob Ashford, Chair of Trustees, presented on behalf of Fair Frome. The food bank had been in place for 3 years and in the last 2 years they had doubled the amount of food given out. From April to December 2017, 422 individual vouchers were giving out giving over 1000 people access to food which would have a value of £14k. Over Christmas they delivered 160 Christmas gift parcels on top of the normal donations. Bob explained there were more people in the town that need the foodbank than 2 years ago. He believed many causes were related to Universal Credit, low wages and zero hour contracts.</p> <p>The furniture bank was launched last April. Like the food bank, people make donations which are collected by volunteers and then given to people who are referred to Fair Frome.</p> <p>Fair Frome also promotes community dining, which gives people a free lunch and advice. The events were also helping to reduce isolation by helping people to get to know each other. They were also partnering with the Big Christmas Get Together.</p> <p>Bob explained that Fair Frome were campaigning such as the access for all project.</p>	
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	<p>Fair Frome had 30 volunteers and rely on 30 hours a week of volunteer time.</p> <p>Bob explained that Fair Frome try to keep their overheads as low as possible to be sustainable. The funding from FTC allows them to plan ahead.</p> <p>Heather Wride explained how she had first hand experience of the distress that universal credit was creating and how she was personally trying to help some residents with meals, clean washing and toiletry products. She said 28% of children in the Keyford ward were living in poverty even though many people were working.</p> <p>Heather said she wanted to propose a £3k increase in the grant to Fair Frome.</p> <p>Paul Wynne confirmed that there were sufficient funds in the General Reserve to cover this extra amount and suggested that Heather’s proposal could be considered when Cllrs discussed the budget at the next item on the agenda.</p>	
2018/4/FC	<p>4. For decision - Work programme, budget and precept demand for 2018/19</p> <p>Toby Eliot provided a summary of how the precept demand had been calculated. He explained that FTC is ambitious with locally led solutions for prosperity, wellbeing and environment. He noted that priorities changed, and these changes were reflected in the work programme and consequent budget for 2018/19. The process followed was one of compromise and negotiation, ambition and affordability.</p> <p>Some projects were ongoing and appeared in the work programme again. Yet there were areas of change and with a different emphasis. There was a need to do more for the community directly but also to enable others to do so too.</p> <p>Toby explained the proposed income matched the expenditure. It was proposed to increase the budget by £72k which would mean a small rise in precept. For a band D property this would mean an increase of 59p per month although 77% of properties in Frome fall into bands A - C so most people would be paying less than 59p.</p> <p>Toby summarised that austerity was a national policy and not a Frome policy. FTC were careful to work on projects that delivered what the town wanted. For example, Fair Frome, the promotion of</p>	

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	<p>electric vehicles, the volunteer drivers scheme and Health Connectors were projects that worked for Frome.</p> <p>Paul Wynne explained how the work programme and budget was put together. The work programme was the starting point which informed the staff structure and the budget needed to deliver it. Paul noted that the work programme was built on key messages that the Council had heard from Cllrs and the community. These were to finish what was started, be more ambitious, engage more and help to enable others.</p> <p>The recommendations were:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Approve the work programme for 2018/19 <p>Proposed by Colin Cobb, seconded by Richard Ackroyd, agreed unanimously.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">2. Note there is sufficient budget to promote the Finance Apprentice to a Finance Administrator and ask the Council Matters Committee to consider the case for support at its next meeting on 21 February.3. Note there is sufficient budget to recruit a Marketing & Communications Apprentice and ask the Council Matters Committee to consider the case for support at its next meeting on 21 February. <p>Proposed by Jean Boulton, seconded by Kate Bielby, agreed unanimously.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">4. Note the report5. Approve the budget to deliver the work programme for 2018/196. Approve the 2018/19 precept amount of £1,268,273 <p>Proposed by Jean Boulton, seconded by Richard Ackroyd, agreed unanimously.</p> <p>Sheila Gore then asked Cllrs views on Heather Wride's proposal to increase the grant to Fair Frome. There followed a discussion. Some Cllrs were surprised by the proposal, others were sympathetic towards it. After the discussion Heather proposed:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">7. To increase funding to Fair Frome by £3k for 2018/19 and that this amount to be taken from the General Reserve. <p>Proposed by Heather Wride, seconded by Jean Boulton, agreed by majority.</p>	
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<p>2018/5/FC</p>	<p>5. For Decision – Improving the condition of Saxonvale Heather Wride left at 8.50pm</p> <p>Richard Ackroyd explained that there were numerous concerns about the safety of the derelict site at Saxonvale. Despite it being private property, it was a popular place for young people to congregate and Rich was concerned about their safety. He noted the site was regularly patrolled by the police.</p> <p>Toby Eliot read out a statement from the trustees of the Notts Industries Pension Fund, the owners of the site, which read: “The scheme trustees are aware of concerns regarding the property and are actively taking steps to implement site security and related appropriate measures imminently. Additionally, a new professional pension trustee is to be appointed shortly following which the property will be re-marketed with a view to an early resolution. The scheme trustees are in liaison with both Mendip District Council and Frome Town Council and will continue to keep them abreast of developments”.</p> <p>Mel Usher thanked Peter Wheelhouse for his continued work regarding Saxonvale. He noted that it was significant that Notts were intending putting the site to market without planning permission and thereby creating the opportunity for a mixed use development for the whole of Saxonvale. Mel suggested that in the future there should be an independent group established to advise FTC and other stakeholders on future steps and on ways to positively channel public views.</p> <p>The recommendation was that the Economic Development & Regeneration Manager continues to liaise closely with officers at Mendip District Council with a view to securing improvements to the condition of the Saxonvale site.</p> <p>Proposed by Jean Boulton, seconded by Kate Bielby, agreed unanimously.</p>	<p>PWh</p>
<p>2018/6/FC</p>	<p>6. For decision - Community Grants £300 - £2k</p> <p>Kate Hellard explained that grant applications were considered and recommended for approval by Cllrs on the Grants Advisory Group. There was a robust decision-making criteria and some applications were unsuccessful. Those that were successful were not always awarded the amount applied for because budgets were limited.</p> <p>The recommendation was to approve the following grants.</p>	

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	Applicant	Project	Amount requested	Amount agreed
	Merlin Theatre	core / match funding / general	£2,000	£2,000
	Trinity First School	Scrapstore Playpod	£2,000	£500
	Young people Frome	Multi-cultural Frome	£2,000	£1,000
	Frome Allotment Association	Mains water supply	£1,000	£1,000
	Songs for Memory	Songs for memory (formerly Singing for the brain)		£1,000
	Open Storytellers	All join in Peer to Peer	£2,000	£500
			Total	£6,000
	Proposed by Toby Eliot, seconded by Peter Macfadyen, agreed by majority.			
2018/7/FC	The next meeting will be at 7pm on Wednesday 7 March 2018 at Frome Town Hall			

The Chair closed the meeting at 9.01pm