

FROME TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of Frome Town Council

Wednesday 23 May 2018 at 7pm
Frome Town Hall, Christchurch Street West, Frome BA11 1EB

Present:

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

In attendance:

Martin Dimery (SCC Cllr), Des Harris (MDC Cllr), Paul Wynne (Town Clerk), Peter Wheelhouse (Deputy Town Clerk), Jackie Wheeler (Responsible Finance Officer), Hannah Paniccia (Finance Administrator), Kate Hellard (Community Projects Officer), Laura Flaherty (Executive Assistant to the Town Clerk and Mayor)

14 members of the public

Minute Ref	Agenda Item	Action
2018/16/FC	<p>The meeting started at 7.07pm</p> <p>1. Election of the Town Mayor and Deputy Town Mayor Sheila Gore thanked FTC staff and Cllrs for their support and said she had enjoyed working so closely with them all. She said she had a lovely time as Mayor of Frome.</p> <p>Sheila proposed Richard Ackroyd as Mayor of Frome for 2018/19, this was seconded by Colin Cobb and agreed unanimously.</p> <p>Sheila handed the Mayoral chain to Richard and he took the seat as Chair.</p> <p>Richard Ackroyd nominated Mark Dorrington as Deputy Mayor, this was seconded by Sheila Gore and agreed unanimously.</p>	
2018/17/FC	<p>2a. Apologies for absence Received from Jean Boulton and Mark Dorrington</p> <p>2b. Declaration of members’ interests None was received.</p> <p>2c. Minutes from the last meeting on 7 March 2018 The minutes of the Frome Town Council meeting held on 7 March 2018 were approved as a true record of the meeting and signed by the Chair.</p> <p>Proposed by Nick White, seconded by Colin Cobb, agreed unanimously.</p>	

FROME TOWN COUNCIL

<p>2018/18/FC</p>	<p>3. Questions and comments from the public and Cllrs Ali Barclay arrived at 7.11pm Heather Wride left at 7.20pm Toby Eliot arrived at 7.21pm</p> <p>There was a discussion around the recent cabinet meeting at MDC where the parking proposals were discussed. Richard Ackroyd noted he had spoken at the meeting. The agreed had agreed not to charge the Independent Market for use of the parking spaces on a Sunday. However, there would be a flat rate of £2 to park on a Sunday for individuals. Also, the introduction of price rises for season ticket holders would be phased over three years. Nick White noted the meeting process at MDC was very different from FTC's. He said it seemed as though Cllrs on Mendip's cabinet appeared to wilfully misunderstand comments from the public who had no opportunity to reply. Nick noted he had received an email from David Warburton MP who was supportive of Frome's position.</p> <p>Mel Usher said that he felt that MDC had lost contact with community and Frome. Their focus was more on commercial and financial survival.</p> <p>Martin Dimery said he felt that there had been elements of misrepresentation at the cabinet meeting. He suggested making a formal complaint against the Leader of MDC. Martin said to call 5000 people, who had signed the petition calling for the charges not to go ahead, a mob is a disgrace and showed the Leader of the Council had contempt for the people of Frome.</p> <p>Gill Fone acknowledged her appreciation for Jackie Wheeler as she had always been greatly helpful. Gill wished her well in her retirement.</p> <p>Lenka Grimes informed Cllrs that a planning application for an incinerator in Westbury had been submitted. Any comments had to be submitted before 30 May. Lenka urged FTC to make an objection to the plans. Paul Wynne asked Lenka to email him the details and the Planning Advisory Group would look into the application and decide what response was appropriate.</p> <p>Rich Ackroyd said that fly tipping was continuing around the town and surrounding areas.</p>	
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FROME TOWN COUNCIL

2018/19/FC	<p>4. For decision - Adoption of Standing Orders</p> <p>Paul Wynne explained that FTC were required to adopt standing orders on an annual basis. The only significant changes for this year were an update reflecting new data protection legislation and minor changes to the definitions of roles of Lead Cllrs and project leads.</p> <p>The recommendation was to approve the revised Standing Orders for 2018/19.</p> <p>Proposed by Nick White, seconded by Kate Bielby, agreed unanimously.</p>	
2018/20/FC	<p>5. For decision - Financial Regulations</p> <p>Jackie Wheeler explained that like the standing orders the financial regulations were reviewed annually. They were checked by the Internal Auditors who suggested minor changes. Jackie noted that the section on purchase orders had been tightened up and the section on community grants had been updated.</p> <p>The recommendation was that changes to the Financial Regulations are approved for adoption to become the formal Financial Regulations at the end of the meeting.</p> <p>Proposed by Gary Collinson, seconded by Tricia Golinski, agreed unanimously.</p>	
2018/21/FC	<p>6. For decision - Election of the Leader and Deputy Leader, membership of committees and advisory groups and the appointment of Lead Cllrs for projects and areas of work</p> <p>Pippa Goldfinger arrived at 7.37pm</p> <p>1. Election of the Leader and Deputy Leader</p> <p>Toby Eliot proposed Kate Bielby as Leader, seconded by Nick White, agreed unanimously.</p> <p>Toby Eliot proposed Mel Usher as Deputy Leader, seconded by Sheila Gore, agreed unanimously.</p> <p>2. Membership of committees and Chairs</p> <p>The proposals were:</p> <p>a. Council Matters Committee</p>	

FROME TOWN COUNCIL

	<p>Richard Ackroyd, Kate Bielby, Mel Usher, Colin Cobb, Gary Collinson, Sheila Gore (Chair), Pippa Goldfinger, Toby Eliot, Heather Wride, Cath Puddick, Peter Macfadyen</p> <p>Proposed by Toby Eliot, seconded by Nick White, agreed unanimously.</p> <p>b. Town Matters Committee</p> <p>Richard Ackroyd, Kate Bielby, Mel Usher, Colin Cobb, Gary Collinson (Chair), Sheila Gore, Nick White, Ali Barclay, Mark Dorrington, Tricia Golinski, Al O’Kane, Jean Boulton</p> <p>Proposed by Toby Eliot, seconded by Kate Bielby, agreed unanimously.</p> <p>c. Planning Advisory Group</p> <p>Sheila Gore, Pippa Goldfinger, Colin Cobb (Chair), Mark Dorrington, Gary Collinson, Richard Ackroyd</p> <p>Proposed by Toby Eliot, seconded by Gary Collinson, agreed unanimously.</p> <p>d. Grants Advisory Group</p> <p>Ali Barclay, Nick White, Mark Dorrington, Gary Collinson, Peter Macfadyen, Tricia Golinski, Al O’Kane</p> <p>Proposed by Toby Eliot, seconded by Sheila Gore, agreed unanimously.</p> <p>3. Lead Cllrs</p> <p>a. Resilience/ Environment – Peter Macfadyen</p> <p>b. Arts and Music – Al O’Kane</p> <p>c. Business/ Economic development – Jean Boulton</p> <p>d. Wellbeing – Ali Barclay</p> <p>e. Town Centre – Mel Usher</p> <p>f. Sports and Leisure – Gary Collinson</p> <p>g. Transport – Tricia Golinski</p> <p>h. Planning/Design – Colin Cobb</p> <p>Cllr Coordinators</p> <p>a. Finance – Sheila Gore</p> <p>b. Communications – Mel Usher</p>	
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FROME TOWN COUNCIL

	<p>Proposed by Toby Eliot, seconded by Kate Bielby, agreed unanimously.</p> <p>4. Project Champions</p> <p>Project Champions provide tactical support to the lead member of staff on projects with a limited life span. They will be agreed by Council on an ad hoc basis.</p>	
2018/22/FC	<p>7. For decision - Adopt the General Power of Competence</p> <p>The recommendation was to confirm that the eligibility criteria for utilising the power of general competence are met.</p> <p>Proposed by Peter Macfadyen, seconded by Colin Cobb, agreed unanimously.</p>	
2018/23/FC	<p>8a. For decision - Annual Governance and Accountability Return</p> <p>The recommendation was:</p> <p>1. This Council instructs the Chair and the Clerk to sign on their behalf, their agreement to all the governance statements in Section 1 of the Annual Governance Statement and for it to be recorded as a minute reference.</p> <p>Proposed by Tricia Golinski, seconded by Gary Collinson, agreed unanimously.</p>	JW
2018/24/FC	<p>8b. For decision - Annual Governance and Accountability Return</p> <p>The recommendations were:</p> <p>2. The Responsible Finance Officer has certified that the accounting statements fairly represent the financial position of Frome Town Council.</p> <p>3. The Cllrs to instruct the Chair and the RFO to sign on their behalf that they have approved the accounting statements.</p> <p>Proposed by Ali Barclay, seconded by Nick White, agreed unanimously.</p>	
2018/25/FC	<p>8c. For decision - Annual Governance and Accountability Return</p> <p>The recommendations were:</p> <p>4. Approve the Earmarked Reserves for the start of the financial year.</p> <p>5. Note the amount in the General Reserve at the start of the financial year.</p>	

FROME TOWN COUNCIL

	<p>Proposed by Colin Cobb, seconded by Sheila Gore, agreed unanimously.</p> <p>Richard Ackroyd noted that Jackie was retiring, and the Annual Return was her last responsibility. Rich thanked Jackie for always doing a brilliant job. She had always been a tower of strength and thanked Jackie for all she done on behalf of all staff and Cllrs.</p>	
<p>2018/26/FC</p>	<p>9. For decision – Future Frome Project</p> <p>Peter Wheelhouse gave an overview of the report. He explained that even though the proposal for a garden village in Frome was significant there was a bigger picture. At the time of the meeting there were 949 new homes in the pipeline, either being built or had consent. Peter noted that the growing population needed more than housing to be resilient. There was also a need for more work space to create much needed jobs.</p> <p>Other things to take into consideration were healthcare and was there a need for more provision, generating energy and looking at new and renewable forms as well as transport and a need for more provision. He proposed that a planning consultant was contracted to draft a background statement, policies and best practice.</p> <p>Peter explained it was important to ask the community what they thought. It was proposed to hold a series of events over the summer for the community to have their say.</p> <p>Nick White asked if there was a budget for the proposed consultant? Peter answered £25k had been budgeted.</p> <p>Charles Wood said it felt like déjà vu with the work already done by Vision for Frome. He asked what the beginning date of the project was and the relationship to the community plan? Peter explained the aim was to take account of the community plan as many of the objectives were still relevant. The proposed timescale was 2018 – 2036 and the project would inform FTC’s response to planning decisions like the garden village for example.</p> <p>Mel Usher said he was concerned there was a move away from evaluating the garden village proposal. He noted an application could be live in a few months, therefore FTC should concentrate on what the community wanted as a town from the garden village rather than re doing work already done. He felt the proposal was too general.</p>	

FROME TOWN COUNCIL

	<p>Peter Macfadyen asked Peter to clarify if the total cost of the project was £25k. Peter confirmed that this cost was for everything including the cost of the events and for the consultant.</p> <p>Lenka Grimes suggested there should be more collaboration with other organisations in the town. Peter confirmed this was the intention and FTC would engage with a wide range of organisations.</p> <p>Colin Cobb said the proposals came from a feeling FTC would need to respond to the garden village application very soon. He said it was important to have a process for the community to respond before this happened.</p> <p>Pippa Goldfinger noted the point of planning was to get ahead of yourself. The garden village process was all happening very quickly and there was a sense of urgency to analyse what was happening. She said the proposal would give FTC a head start.</p> <p>There was a discussion around amending the recommendations. Al O’Kane suggested bringing detailed costings back to a Town Matters meeting.</p> <p>The recommendations were:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. A ‘Future Frome Panel’ is established to steer work to assess the future needs of the town including appropriate house types, employment, education, retail, healthcare, leisure, open space and other essential community infrastructure and develop a vision that will inform the review of the Local Plan and future planning decisions. <p>Proposed by Pippa Goldfinger, seconded by Peter Macfadyen, agreed by majority.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">2. Pippa Goldfinger, Gary Collinson, Colin Cobb, Peter Macfadyen and Al O’Kane to represent FTC on this panel and representation to be sought from MDC, SCC and Selwood and Berkley Parish Councils <p>Proposed by Tricia Golinski, seconded by Colin Cobb, agreed by majority.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">3. Public events are held in July to engage stakeholder organisations and the wider community in exploring these needs	
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FROME TOWN COUNCIL

	<p>Proposed Al O’Kane, seconded Gary Collinson, agreed by majority.</p> <p>4. Cllrs agree authority being granted to the Deputy Town Clerk to negotiate a contribution from MDC</p> <p>Proposed by Pippa Goldfinger, seconded by Colin Cobb, agreed by majority.</p> <p>5. Authority is delegated to the Planning & Development Manager to finalise a consultancy brief for approval at the Town Matters Committee meeting on 20 June 2018</p> <p>Proposed by Pippa Goldfinger, seconded by Colin Cobb, agreed by majority.</p>	
2018/27/FC	<p>10. For decision - Changes to FTC community grants</p> <p>Kate Hellard explained that the aim of adjusting the terms and conditions was to make it easier for smaller organisations to access funding. However, the same rigor for the larger grants was still in place.</p> <p>Toby Eliot noted that the terms and conditions were tweaked every year. The changes on this occasion dealt with the issue of sometime giving an award of funding when it wasn’t felt it should be given for example for core funding or for anyone in receipt of a multiyear agreement (MYA).</p> <p>Charles Wood asked if an organisation in receipt of a MYA could apply for a grant towards core funding. Kate clarified that this could be done but then that organisation would not be eligible to do so again for the next three years.</p> <p>Lenka Grimes asked if a group had to be a registered charity to apply for a mayor’s grant? Kate explained this wasn’t a requirement however the group would need a constitution and bank account.</p> <p>The recommendation was to agree the revised terms and conditions and grant criteria for the Mayors Small Grants and Community Grants.</p> <p>Proposed by Toby Eliot, seconded by Ali Barclay, agreed unanimously.</p>	KH
2018/28/FC	11. For decision - To recruit an additional part-time Town Ranger	

FROME TOWN COUNCIL

	<p>Paul Wynne explained that the demands on the Ranger team had increased significantly in recent times and they were now struggling to keep up with planned work let alone respond to opportunities.</p> <p>Nick White noted the work of the Rangers was the most visible of everything FTC does, and their work was highly appreciated. He felt the post should be a full time one.</p> <p>Mel Usher expressed his concern that increasing the post to full time would greatly reduce general reserves.</p> <p>Nick White proposed making the Ranger post full time, this was seconded by Al O’Kane, the proposal was not carried.</p> <p>The recommendations were:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Delegate to the Environment Manager the recruitment of a permanent Town Ranger (up to 22 hours per week). 2. Transfer £13k from the General Reserve to the staff budget <p>Proposed by Pippa Goldfinger, seconded by Tricia Golinski, agreed unanimously.</p>	<p>CS JW</p>
<p>2018/29/FC</p>	<p>12. Confidential item – Staff pay bands</p> <p>Toby Eliot explained that the recommendation reflected that the roles of the Town Clerk and the Deputy Town Clerk had changed over time and that it was also fair that all staff posts had the same pay band width. He noted that the pay band was broadly in line with other councils of similar size. The recommendations were:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Set the pay band for the Town Clerk at 51 – 57 2. Set the pay band for Deputy Town Clerk at 46 – 52 3. These changes to have effect from 1 April 2018. 4. Confirm to both staff that progression through the pay band is dependent on meeting the objectives set at the annual appraisal. <p>Nick White said he was not a great believer in benchmarking and felt employers should pay what they thought fit.</p> <p>The recommendation was proposed by Toby Eliot, seconded by Pippa Goldfinger and agreed unanimously.</p>	
<p>2018/30/FC</p>	<p>The next meeting will be at 7pm on Wednesday 4 July 2018 at Frome Town Hall</p>	

The Chair closed the meeting at 8.58pm