

FROME TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the Town Matters Committee

Wednesday 20 June 2018 at 7pm

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

Present:

Councillors: Richard Ackroyd, Ali Barclay, Jean Boulton, Mark Dorrington, Tricia Golinski, Mel Usher, Gary Collinson (chair)

In attendance:

John Clarke (SCC Cllr), Tom Killen (Deputy Leader, MDC), Helen Fielden (Volunteer Frome), Susi Calder (Volunteer Frome), Paul Wynne (Town Clerk), Kate Hellard (Community Projects Officer), Charlie Orr (Project Officer), Rachel Griffin (Marketing and Communications Manager), Laura Flaherty (Executive Assistant to the Town Clerk and Mayor), Laura Hales (Marketing and Communications Assistant)

10 members of the public

Minute Ref	Agenda Item	Action
2018/18/TM	The meeting started at 7pm 1a. Apologies for absence Received from Kate Bielby, Sheila Gore and Cath Puddick 1b. Declaration of members' interests None was received 1c. Minutes from the last meeting on 25 April 2018 Paul Wynne confirmed that the Royal Oak pub had been designated as an Asset of Community Value by MDC. The minutes of the Town Matters Committee meeting held on 25 April 2018 were approved as a true record of the meeting and signed by the Chair. Proposed by Jean Boulton, seconded by Mel Usher, agreed by majority.	
2018/19/TM	2. Questions and comments from the public and Cllrs Gill Fone commented that she was expecting a phone call from MDC to discuss the overgrown river bank near the Westway and resurfacing of Button Bridge.	
2018/20/TM	3. To appoint the Deputy Chair of Town Matters Mel Usher proposed Jean Boulton, seconded by Tricia Golinski, agreed unanimously.	

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2018/21/TM	4. For decision – Town Matters Committee agendas for 2018/19 Peter Macfadyen asked if all recipients of multi-year agreements had presented at a Town Matters meeting. Paul Wynne confirmed they had and they would all present again throughout the 2018/19 meetings. The recommendation was to adopt the approach to future Committee meetings. Proposed by Mark Dorrington, seconded by Jean Boulton, agreed unanimously.	
2018/22/TM	5. For decision – Redundant toilet blocks in Frome, what next? Mel Usher explained that the toilet blocks at Badcox, Gorehedge, Cork Street and Merchants Barton had been redundant for seven years. Mel noted that for visitors the run down blocks were sometimes their first site of Frome when using the car parks. He said they were an embarrassment to a body that claims to champion prosperity. His recommendation was for all Frome MDC Cllrs to ask MDC cabinet and CEO when the blocks will be dealt with. Tom Killen, Deputy Leader of MDC, explained a decision about the future of the blocks had been taken at the end of year. Badcox was being used for storage for market and street cleansing. Tom said he agreed that the others were eyesores; MDC was going through the procurement exercise to demolish them as soon as possible. He explained Gorehedge would be more difficult because of its location next to the highway meaning it would need to be demolished by hand. Tom explained the reason they hadn't been demolished sooner was delays because of utilities. He confirmed MDC were committed to the removal of the blocks and then reinstating the surface. Mark Dorrington asked what would then sit on the sites? Tom explained it would either be for parking or an attractive area, they were currently looking into options. Mark asked if the area where the Cork Street toilets were could be provide the lost free parking? Tom said he would ask the question of his colleagues at MDC to see if it was feasible. Gill Fone asked if there could be coach parking instead? Tom said he was not sure it would be practical but would look into it. Peter Macfadyen said it was great that the Badcox toilets were being used. However, all the windows were smashed and asked if it could be tidied up. Tom said there was intention to do that. Mel Usher thanked Tom for attending the meeting and for being so positive.	

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	Due to the update of action from Tom Killen the recommendations in the report were no longer necessary.	
2018/23/TM	6. For information - Community development update Rich Ackroyd arrived at 7.36pm Kate Hellard explained that in February 2018 Cllrs agreed a programme of community development. A pilot was being conducted in the Trinity area of Frome. So far, a series of projects had been worked on such as litter picking as this was a priority for residents. A new bin had also been installed near the shops which residents were pleased with. Soon a community noticeboard would be installed near to the Bridge Café. Also, residents were looking into organising a street party. Kate noted that she was also working with the schools in the area on projects, one of which would be a community garden. Kate explained that residents had become more engaged when there was a project to get involved with. Liverty (social housing) would be introducing street games which could possibly take place at Weylands but the preference would be on a street. Vallis school children were organising a stop bullying march in October and were inviting the other schools in the town to join them. This would then lead into a campaign around friendly neighbourhoods. Kate noted that she had started conversations with County Highways and the police about residents closing their streets for events. The aim was to create an easy to access pack that would be signed off by all the relevant authorities. John Clarke asked if there were plans to extend the programme to other areas in Frome. Kate explained there were no immediate plans as the work in the Trinity area had only just started. However, she was working with smaller community groups in Egford Park, Nunney Road and Trinity Park (Garston). The intention was to set up a peer to peer support forum. Jean Boulton asked Kate how she intended to evaluate the project? Kate explained she would use an impact research method, where research would be conducted throughout the project. She noted she was keeping a diary and recording anecdotes and measuring the more tangible outcomes such as a reduction in anti-social behaviour.	
2018/24/TM	7. For information - Volunteer Frome update Kate Hellard explained Volunteer Frome had been running since April 2017 and FTC had commissioned SPARK to run it. The intention was for Volunteer Frome to act as a 'dating agency' and match people offering time as volunteers with organisations looking for support.	

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	Volunteer Frome came about as several organisations were looking for volunteers for the same roles, at the same time and all doing separate call outs. As a result of this and conversations that followed, Volunteer Frome was established, and a website created, which included an online tool for both volunteers and organisations to complete in order to flag their opportunities. Helen Fielden has recently been employed to work with young volunteers, with the aim of engaging a different demographic of volunteers, particularly those aged 16 – 20 years. Helen is working with various organisations, including Frome College and Routes, to look at different ways of engaging young people. Having overcome initial teething problems in establishing Volunteer Frome, there are still areas of the project Frome Town Council is keen to see improved. In discussion with SPARK there are plans to move this forward. SCC / County Councillors are also keen to hear more about the Frome model and Volunteer Frome have been invited to share information on this. Susi Calder, Volunteer Development Manager, explained that the traditional brokerage model was now a little dated. For example, she said that the process of signing up and transferring to Volunteer Frome was difficult. They were looking at making it a smoother process. Susi explained micro volunteering was becoming more popular as it fitted better with modern lifestyles. It allows people to use their skills across a range of organisations and not be wedded to just to one. Peter Macfadyen asked when a report would come back to a Town Matters meeting? Kate explained that FTC was in the middle of a three year contract but she was discussing with SPARK possible contractual changes and a report would come back as soon as possible. Mel Usher said he felt more optimistic about Volunteer Frome. However, he said there was still a need for statistics to be confident that the project was succeeding because a firm foundation was important as local services could disappear further. He asked Kate to keep coming back and tell Cllrs how they should help. A follow up report would be brought to the next meeting on 19 September.	KH
2018/25/TM	8. For information - Frome Town Centre Economic Survey Results 2017 Charlie Orr explained the purpose and process of benchmarking. He explained that students on work experience helped gather the	

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	necessary data. The results of one of the surveys showed the sectors within the town: 72% of shops were independent, which was higher than the national and regional average; shop vacancy rates were at 3 % which was dramatically less than the national average. There had been a significant increase in the amount of visitors from over 30 miles away: 32% in 2017 compared with only 6% in 2016 and again this was higher than the national average. A negative aspect of the town for businesses was charging for car parking. Overall the surveys showed that Frome was a vibrant community that attracted people from further afield and had a strong retail offering. Ali Barclay suggested finding out what was attractive to visitors. Charlie said he would explore how this could be incorporated in the questions in the survey. Tricia Golinski noted it would be useful to ask people where they are from and how they got here. This could assist in improvements to public transport. Alternatively, incentives could be offered for not travelling by car. Tom Killen added that for MDC it was about ensuring there was adequate parking in the right place. He said they would welcome input of FTC and residents.	CO
2018/26/TM	9. For decision - Performing Arts Update Rachel Griffin noted that the Performing Arts Forum met twice a year. One of the current roles of the forum was to identify rehearsal spaces in the town. Rachel explained that most effort had been spent on improvements to the Discover Frome website, an intern had been focussing on this. During the past year there had been a 91.75% increase in visits to the events pages. Different event pages had been created for Discover Frome and the Frome Community website to reflect the audience. Also a venue directory was being put together to help with demand for rehearsal space Rachel also spoke about Walkers are Welcome, the community noticeboards and the Frome Busks event.	

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	Jean Boulton said it was good to know the visitor numbers and asked how we review the Information Point performance. Rachel explained the Information Point was being treated as a separate project. A separate report would be brought back to the next meeting. Rachel also introduced the Frome bursary for young people which would provide ‘premium pupils’ with access to arts provision. In addition, Rachel was exploring the viability of a Saturday morning music provision. Mark Dorrington asked if other organisations in the town had been approached to support the bursary? Rachel explained there had been a conversation with the Rotary about supporting various projects for pupil premium students. It would be delivered in conjunction with Frome College and Frome Learning Partnership. Rich Ackroyd thanked Claire Worrell, FTC’s marketing and communications intern, for her very successful year with FTC and wished her well for the future. The recommendations were: 1. Continue to deliver the recommendations of the newly formed Frome Arts Forum as outlined in the report and within the boundaries of the Marketing and Communications strategy 2. Investigate the establishment of a bursary fund supporting young people to access the arts. 3. Explore the viability of establishing a Saturday morning music provision and if it is viable work with partners to deliver it Proposed by Richard Ackroyd, seconded by Gary Collinson, agreed unanimously.	RG RG RG RG
2018/27/TM	The next meeting will be at 7pm on Wednesday 1 August 2018 at Frome Town Hall	

The Chair closed the meeting at 8.48pm