

Agenda item 7

For information – An update on Volunteer Frome

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Summary

At the June Town Matters meeting we reported on the progress of Volunteer Frome. Cllrs requested that SPARK come back following a proposed review of their work in Frome. SPARK will attend this Town Matters meeting to provide a more comprehensive verbal update and to answer questions from councillors.

A a brief update from SPARK about the Volunteer Frome service

We reported at the last Frome Town Matters meeting in June, that we were about to evaluate the format and processes for Volunteer Frome. The context being that the traditional methods of volunteer recruitment are less effective and particularly young people use different ways to find information and engage in activities. Since then, two interactive workshops with charities and volunteers have yielded a wealth of information, giving us insight into the potential “pain points” in the process of becoming a volunteer. We have identified small changes that we can make to smooth the path for people thinking about volunteering and speed up the time between registering and starting volunteering. We will be testing these changes soon and based on the success of these, we will further adapt the brokerage system.

Alongside this work, the Youth Volunteering Steering Group at Frome College is now well established. 6th Form students meet on a regular basis to help identify how best to activate and involve young people, including helping to select people to deliver training to young people in the future. A student Volunteering Officer feeds back to other students via the new student democracy structure. Workshops have been delivered to new 6th formers to promote the benefits of volunteering, and we have now had students approach us directly to arrange volunteering to suit their needs and interests.

We are continuing to identify organisations willing to work with young volunteers. We have developed a resource aimed at reducing perceived barriers to using young people as volunteers.