

FROME TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the Town Matters Committee

Wednesday 19 September 2018 at 7pm

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

Present:

Councillors: Mark Dorrington, Sheila Gore, Gary Collinson, Kate Bielby, Tricia Golinski, Nick White

In attendance:

Kate Hellard (Community Project Officer), Rachel Griffin (Marketing and Communications Manager), Nicola Cretney (Health and Wellbeing Manager), Mary Dy (Executive Assistant to the Town Clerk and Mayor), Laura Hales (Marketing and Communications Assistant), Peter Wheelhouse (Deputy Town Clerk), Paul Wynne (Town Clerk), Peter Macfadyen (FTC Councillor), John Clarke (SCC Councillor)

24 members of the public

Minute Ref	Agenda Item	Action
2018/35/TM	<p>The meeting started at 7:05pm with a moment of silence for Charles Wood who recently died.</p> <p>1a. Apologies for absence Rich Ackroyd, Ali Barclay, Jean Boulton, Al O’Kane, Mel Usher</p> <p>1b. Declaration of members’ interests Mark Dorrington declared a personal interest as a volunteer of Mendip CAB (item 5).</p> <p>1c. Minutes from the last meeting on 01 August 2018 An update on minute 2018/29/TM: Mark Dorrington and Sheila Gore met with MDC to work out a more streamlined way to hold events at the Boyle Cross. The proposal is now to come back to Council in October with a draft agreement between MDC and FTC.</p> <p>The minutes of the Town Matters Committee meeting held on 01 August 2018 were approved as a true record of the meeting and signed by the Chair.</p> <p>Proposed by Kate Bielby, seconded by Mark Dorrington, agreed unanimously.</p>	
2018/36/TM	<p>2. Questions and comments from the public and Cllrs Resident Andrew Taylor reported that he had met with Mark Dorrington and Peter Wheelhouse regarding Boxworks. He read a statement in which he outlined concerns around reduced parking, the assumption that Saxonvale was the best place for Boxworks and urged FTC to work with MDC and SCC to investigate the town parking</p>	

FROME TOWN COUNCIL

	<p>situation to see how Boxworks can be accommodated. He wanted to know if FTC would be able to support the statement. He said that a Strategic Parking Plan for Frome was need.</p> <p>Kate Bielby thanked Andrew for his statement. She said that FTC was working with MDC and will continue to suggest to MDC that they look at alternative locations as well as the Market Yard for a Boxworks development. Peter Wheelhouse confirmed that FTC is encouraging MDC and SCC to put together a strategic transport (including on and off-street parking) plan for Frome. Kate Taylor asked if they put forward a petition, would FTC support it. Gary Collinson said that FTC would need to consider what MDC was proposing before it could do this.</p> <p>Mark Dorrington mentioned that he would be attending MDC's Full Council meeting on Monday 24 September to present the parking petition.</p>	
2018/37/TM	<p>3. A word about One Voice Somerset Ben Waller from OpenStoryTellers presented the One Voice Somerset project that had been commissioned by SCC to create an advocacy group for people with learning disabilities in Frome. He said that there were two major issues to share with Frome specifically:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Group members are finding public transport to be restrictive; they cannot access certain groups and services because buses run on restricted hours. 2. Cuts to SCC funded services were having a significant impact. It is now much harder for people with learning disabilities to build trusting, meaningful relationships. <p>Joe Gilmer introduced the Safe Spaces scheme and its benefits and expressed a wish to raise awareness of the scheme locally and establish a larger network in Frome.</p> <p>Nick White asked if Frome Town Hall is part of the Safe Spaces scheme. Paul said that it currently was not and said that he would arrange it.</p> <p>Lastly, Ben outlined some next steps for One Voice Somerset and asked FTC to take part in a Q&A event and 'Get Heard' month in 2019 to raise awareness of the issues faced by the learning-disabled community. Cllrs said that FTC would.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">PWy</p> <p style="text-align: right;">PWy</p>
2018/38/TM	<p>4. An update from MYA recipient Active and In Touch Lucia Chadwick said that since September 2017, Active and In Touch have helped 120 people, 94 of which are current beneficiaries. They are taking on four new beneficiaries per month which is an average</p>	

FROME TOWN COUNCIL

	<p>increase of one per month. Currently they have 69 active volunteers; the total number of active volunteers at any one time has increased by an average of 1 per month. These volunteers are completing training sessions in First Aid, dealing with dementia, GDPR and accounting skills.</p> <p>They are continuing to raise their profile: volunteers had appeared on national TV (BBC's The One Show) and were being featured on national Co-Op adverts. In addition, Active and In Touch has been shortlisted 3 times for the Queens Award for Voluntary Service. Their work continues with village outreach projects and supporting people with Alzheimer's and dementia through music. They have continuing partnerships with local organisations such as Edventure Frome and the Rotary Club. In terms of funding, they remain vulnerable especially with SCC withdrawing in many areas and have a Big Lottery funding bid pending a decision in October.</p>	
2018/39/TM	<p>5. An update from MYA recipient Mendip CAB Ian Byworth explained the work of Mendip CAB. He praised the essential work of volunteers and gave an overview of their work in Frome which accounted for a quarter of Mendip CAB's client base.</p> <p>Mendip CAB is a charity, with eight trustees and around ten full-time paid staff. 18 out of their 60 volunteers are in Frome, all of which undertake adviser and local training. Fair Frome is a close partner and one trustee is a Frome resident. Ian noted their funding mostly comes from local authorities and support contracts from Wessex Water, for example. From April 2019, £98K will be cut from SCC funding, which will possibly mean staff redundancies and more restricted opening hours. They are exploring options.</p> <p>The most common problems were around claiming benefits and tax credits, followed by debt and Universal Credit issues. A fair amount of their work revolved around financial capability training. He said that CAB operated a Local Assistance Scheme funded by SCC, which allowed them to award a grant to people in desperate situations. This will be cut from April 2019 due to SCC cuts.</p> <p>Bob Ashford, the chair of trustees of Fair Frome, complimented the work of Mendip CAB and urged FTC to shout about the impact of the SCC cuts to local services on vulnerable people and communities. SCC Cllr John Clarke said that everyone will feel the impact of the cuts and encouraged everyone to lobby David Warburton, Frome's MP.</p>	

FROME TOWN COUNCIL

2018/40/TM	<p>6. For information – an update on community development projects</p> <p>Kate Hellard said that there is an increasing demand for local services and more was being expected from organisations while funding was getting harder to find.</p> <p>Kate and resident Karen Stewart spoke of the Trinity community group project which was making good progress and summarised some recent initiatives and ongoing challenges.</p>	
2018/41/TM	<p>7. For information – an update on Volunteer Frome</p> <p>At the 20 June 2018 Town Matters meeting, Volunteer Frome had been asked to bring a follow up report on their activities to this meeting (minute 2018/24/TM).</p> <p>Susi Calder (Volunteer Development Manager, SPARK) reported that they had started the evaluation of the Volunteer Frome project. She noted that the traditional methods of volunteer recruitment were becoming ineffective especially for young volunteers. Currently they were making progress with Frome College with different methods. Susi also said that their current database software is poor and are looking into whether moving to software called CiviCRM would be a good way forward.</p> <p>Nick White asked if they had any figures available to support their report. Susi said their normal monitoring report will be published in October but that recently they have been building their relationship with Frome College. Challenges included safeguarding issues and myths around attitude of young people. Other barriers include transport, cost of travel and hours that young people can't access.</p> <p>Sheila Gore asked for clarification on the focus of Volunteer Frome. Helen Fielden responded that Volunteer Frome's focus was about encouraging more people to volunteer and for organisations to take more volunteers. Sheila asked if there was a youth council in Frome; Paul Wynne said no, but that the YMCA was exploring how to re-establish one.</p>	
2018/42/TM	<p>8. For information and decision – an update on the Discover Frome Information Point and publishing The Annual 2019</p> <p>Rachel Griffin presented the report which included an update note on the Discover Frome Information Point (DFIP) from volunteer coordinator Susan Cullip. Rachel reported that visitor numbers have increased.</p> <p>DFIP has over 30 volunteers on rotation. Opening hours are Tuesday to Saturday 10am-4pm. Rachel said quarterly training and social gatherings were being implemented to support the volunteers and she</p>	

FROME TOWN COUNCIL

	<p>is looking to pair some volunteers with young people from Frome College.</p> <p>Rachel noted that the DFIP is fully funded until April 2019 with a grant from Mendip Tourism and Leisure and they have also given an additional grant for £4.5K to produce maps for the Walkers are Welcome initiative.</p> <p>GWR has funded improvements to signposting to DFIP and these will be installed by the end of December. Next steps include broadening the range of items for sale. More broadly Rachel is exploring a Discover Frome app that will be more widely available and more comprehensive than paper-based leaflets.</p> <p>The Annual is a printed version of the website, “Discover Frome on paper” providing an attractive presentation of Frome. In March/April 2018, 20 000 copies were printed and distributed, of which 2000 remain. There is £3000 in the 2018/19 budget to support the improvement and publication of The Annual in April 2019.</p> <p>The recommendations were:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Note the success of the Discover Frome Information Point, in particular, the excellent work of the Volunteer Coordinator and the volunteers. 2. Continue to enhance the Discover Frome brand by providing high quality information through digital and online content 3. Continue to enhance the Discover Frome brand by publishing The Annual in April 2019 4. Delegate the above to the Marketing and Communications Manager in consultation with Cllr Usher. <p>Proposed by Kate Bielby, seconded by Sheila Gore, agreed unanimously.</p>	RG
2018/43/TM	<p>9. For decision – official position statement on Saxonvale</p> <p>Peter Wheelhouse said that MDC had purchased a large part of Saxonvale and that much of the site was now in public ownership. This presented a significant opportunity to deliver comprehensive regeneration of this area. Success will depend on FTC and MDC working closely together and reaching a consensus on how the site will be developed. Peter said there was a need for an FTC position statement on what was expected from developing Saxonvale.</p> <p>The position statement tabled was discussed and agreed with a few minor amendments around the need to be more aspirational around the proportion of affordable housing and the need to include community as well as cultural spaces in the development.</p>	

FROME TOWN COUNCIL

The approved position statement is below:

This statement draws on the policies and objectives within the Saxonvale Planning Brief & Design Codes 2005, Frome River Strategy 2012, Town Design Statement 2015, Frome Neighbourhood Plan 2008-28, draft Saxonvale policy in Mendip Local Plan Part 2 and evidence of need in the town.

- 1. We wish to explore how FTC can work with MDC to deliver a high-quality comprehensive scheme that fully integrates with the existing town centre and provides sustainable transport choices, with good means of access for those on foot and bicycle between the development and the existing town centre and providing relief for Vicarage Street.*
- 2. We are prepared to explore the possibility of inclusion of FTC's own land in any scheme.*
- 3. We support a mixed-use solution. The mix should include:*
 - a. A broad range of dwellings in terms of size, cost and tenure. To address the pressing need for more affordable accommodation in the town, we would expect to see social rented and shared equity opportunities as part of the mix. There should be a **minimum of** (inserted additional wording) 30% affordable housing. We would also like to explore the possibility of delivering housing that meets the needs of young people and families who are currently priced out of Frome and the growing number of older people ('downsizers') whose future housing aspirations are not being met by either specialist retirement developments or mass-market housing products.*
 - b. Retail space that broadens the comparison offer of the town centre through sensitive new development*
 - c. Leisure e.g. restaurants, pubs and hotel accommodation that encourage greater evening activity and space for cultural and community activity, for example a town square, that will enhance the town centre as a destination*
 - d. Workspace that helps to meet the needs of businesses in the town and the opportunity for training providers such as SS&L to continue to operate in the town centre.*
 - e. A well-connected riverside park to improve access to the river as well as other public spaces and a new pedestrian and cycle bridge across the river that will better connect the development with both the existing town centre and surrounding residential areas and enable cyclists to avoid busier roads in the town centre.*
- 4. Our expectation is that the development closest to the existing town centre will be of a higher density with a gradation to lower density development towards Rivers Reach. Building heights should respect the topography.*

FROME TOWN COUNCIL

	<p>5. <i>FTC would wish to see an opportunity for the community to be engaged pre-application.</i></p> <p>There was a discussion and consensus around the importance of high-quality community engagement.</p> <p>Proposed alteration to the statement to incorporate a minimum of 30% affordable housing by Sheila Gore and seconded by Tricia Golinski. Agreed unanimously.</p> <p>The recommendations were:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Approve the position statement on Saxonvale as amended 2. Delegate to the Deputy Town Clerk in consultation with the Project Sponsor to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. begin to explore how FTC can work with MDC to deliver a comprehensive scheme including FTC's land b. discuss with MDC how the community can be engaged in the planning process pre-application 3. A further report is brought back to Cllrs at a future meeting to update on progress <p>Proposed by Tricia Golinski, seconded by Nick White, agreed unanimously.</p>	PWh
2018/44/TM	<p>10. For decision – financial contribution to the zomph zone for town centre</p> <p>Peter Wheelhouse explained that Cllrs had already approved the proposal to implement a zomph zone in the town centre in July 2017. He said that SCC is now proposing to implement this. There was a requirement for FTC to make a financial contribution of £4K. Because there was a need to take a decision between meetings, the Town Clerk has already approved this expenditure and Cllrs were being asked to ratify this decision.</p> <p>Tricia Golinski said she is especially supportive of the zomph zone. Nick White wanted to make sure the roundels on the road were attractive and not excessive. Peter Wheelhouse reassured him.</p> <p>The recommendations were:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ratify the decision to contribute £4k towards the high friction surface elements of the 20-mph zone installation utilising the Market Place Phase 2 EMR 2. Widely publicise well in advance of the start of the work, the timetable and traffic management arrangements <p>Proposed by Tricia Golinski, seconded by Kate Bielby, agreed unanimously.</p>	PWh

FROME TOWN COUNCIL

2018/45/TM	PC Simon Humpfreys introduced himself, explained that there would be an increased neighbourhood police presence in the town from October onwards and said that following the meeting he and colleagues would be available to answer any questions from the public.	
2018/46/TM	The next meeting will be at 7pm on Wednesday 19 September 2018 at Frome Town Hall	

The Chair closed the meeting at 9:36pm