

FROME TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of Frome Town Council

Wednesday 15 May 2019 at 7pm
Frome Town Hall, Christchurch Street West, Frome BA11 1EB

Present:

Councillors: Mark Dorrington (Chair), Rich Ackroyd, Ali Barclay, Lizzie Boyle, Sara Butler, Rob Collett, Maxine Crawley, Nick Dove, Sheila Gore, Anne Hills, Paul Horton, John Nelson, Andy Palmer, Scott Ward

In attendance: Paul Wynne (Town Clerk), Peter Wheelhouse (Deputy Town Clerk and Economic Development & Regeneration Manager), Chloe Bray (Executive Assistant to the Town Clerk and Mayor), Sarah Williams (Business Manager), Anna Francis (Resilience Manager), Laura Hales (Marketing and Communications Officer), Emma Reynolds (Principal of Frome College), John Clarke (Mendip District Council), Adam Boyden (Mendip District Council), Shane Collins (Mendip District Council), Helen Kay (Mendip District Council), Michael Dunk (Mendip District Council), Helen Sprawson-White (Mendip District Council), Drew Gardner (Mendip District Council), 2 Police officers, 3 member of the press

15 members of the public

Minute Ref	Agenda Item	Action
2019/01/FC	<p>The meeting started at 7.04pm</p> <p>1. Election of Mayor and Deputy Mayor Mayor for 2018-19 Rich Ackroyd asked for nominations for his successor.</p> <p>John Nelson proposed Mark Dorrington be elected Mayor. This was seconded by Nick Dove and agreed unanimously. There were no other nominations.</p> <p>Rich commended Mark's year as Deputy Mayor and congratulated him. The Mayor's Chains of Office were given to Mark Dorrington, and a Past Mayor badge was presented to Rich. Mark signed his acceptance of office of the Mayor of Frome</p> <p>As Mayor, Mark became chair of the meeting.</p> <p>Mark asked for nominations for Deputy Mayor for 2019-20.</p> <p>Scott Ward proposed Anita Collier to be elected Deputy Mayor. This was seconded by Andy Palmer and agreed unanimously. There were no other nominations. Anita was not present so Paul Wynne will ensure he witnesses her signing her acceptance of office of the deputy Mayor of Frome</p>	
2019/02/FC		

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	<p>2a. Apologies for absence Received from Anita Collier, Steve Tanner and Andy Wrintmore</p> <p>2b. Declaration of members' interests None was received</p> <p>2c. Minutes from the last meeting on 23 May 2018</p> <p>The minutes of the Frome Town Council meeting held on 6 March 2019 were approved as a true record of the meeting and signed by the Chair.</p> <p>Proposed by Mark Dorrington, seconded by Rich Ackroyd, agreed by majority New Cllrs abstained</p>	
2019/03/FC	<p>3. Presentation from Emma Reynolds, Principal of Frome College</p> <p>Emma presented an update on the work and activities of Frome College faculty and students.</p> <p>She discussed the work the college was doing in the arts, including their recent production of Chicago. She praised the Year 9 students completing a Duke of Edinburgh award. All students were able to take part following a donation by the Rotary Club to cover costs. She emphasized how important it was to be inclusive, especially as Frome College is often the only stable factor in the lives of some of the more vulnerable students.</p> <p>She then moved on to literacy levels and pointed out that some students have a higher writing age than reading age. Some year 9 students who are 14 had reading ages as low as age 6-7. The College is addressing these issues in a number of ways, including a project that combines reading and football, and a radio club in partnership with Frome FM that improves articulation.</p> <p>In the area of careers, the College had recently had its mock interview day and Emma thanked the Cllrs and others present who had volunteered. She also invited anyone who might want to take part in their Careers Breakfast events where professionals in various fields come into school and talk to students about their work.</p> <p>She described the residency more able students had done at Cambridge University and their recent success in the Physics Challenge, a national competition where they had placed well. She also talked about the Student Union at the College, and in particular the Eco Committee.</p> <p>Finally, talked about the recent investment in IT and highlighted that</p>	

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	<p>lack of funding is hampering students’ access to up to date hardware and software. She invited everyone to the Frome Extravaganza event at Frome College on June 24, where there will be a variety of activities to raise money for charities Martin House and Winston’s Wish.</p> <p>A member of the public asked why there were so many students with low reading ages. Emma explained this was a complex issue that was also being picked up at middle school level. She said a decline in reading for pleasure was part of it and that children from poorer families may experience a lack of financial resources, domestic support for reading and that parents from these families were less likely to have the time needed to teach reading.</p> <p>Nick White asked what was being done at middle and first schools to tackle this issue and Emma explained that the Frome Learning Partnership meets regularly to discuss such issues and that schools were using specialist software to help teach reading.</p> <p>Shane Collins commended the students he had met at the Climate Strikes and asked if students were being penalised for attending the protests. Emma explained that the school was very concerned about the impact of climate change but that no headteacher could authorise absence for strikes. She said Sixth Form students had recently had a productive talk with her on the subject and the growing eco committee in the school is doing good work. She also mentioned that the school had to pay for recycling and would like better infrastructure to increase recycling efforts.</p> <p>Lizzie Boyle asked about adult education at the College. Emma explained they do not have the funding or infrastructure to provide this. Sue Klepper from Frome Community Education offered to meet with Emma to discuss possible ways forward.</p> <p>Mark thanked Emma for her time and presentation.</p>	
2019/04/FC	<p>4. Questions and comments from the public and Cllrs</p> <p>Gill Fone asked why car parking bays had been painted onto the site of the old toilets and why coaches weren’t able to park there. Mark asked whether MDC Cllrs could take this forward and Helen Sprawson-White said they would look into it.</p> <p>Adam Boyden highlighted the change of leadership at Mendip District Council following local elections and encouraged people to get in touch. Mark said that FTC are looking forward to working with the new administration .</p>	

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2019/05/FC	<p>5. Deciding whether to adopt the Council’s Standing Orders and Cllrs’ Code of Conduct, and whether to adopt the General Power of Competence</p> <p>Paul Wynne highlighted the importance of the Standing Orders and Cllrs Code of Conduct and confirmed that the Council was eligible to adopt the General Power of Competence.</p> <p>Lizzie Boyle proposed the following amendment to the Standing Orders:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Add to paragraph 4.11. the text below in bold:</p> <p style="padding-left: 80px;">4.11. Wherever possible, meeting venues will enable people with disabilities to participate fully in meetings. This applies to meeting agendas and reports as well: large print, Braille, audio or language translations can be made available, please contact reception at Frome Town Hall.</p> <p>This was seconded by Sara Butler and agreed unanimously.</p> <p>The recommendations were:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Approve the Standing Orders at Appendix 5.1 with the amendment made above <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Proposed by Lizzie Boyle, seconded by Sara Butler and agreed unanimously.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Approve the Cllrs’ Code of Conduct at Appendix 5.2 <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Proposed by Mark Dorrington, seconded by Rich Ackroyd and agreed unanimously.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Confirm that the eligibility criteria for utilising the General Power of Competence are met <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Proposed by Sheila Gore, seconded by Anne Hills and agreed unanimously.</p>	
2019/06/FC	<p>6. Appointing Leader and Deputy Leader of the Council and memberships, chairs and deputy chairs of committees and advisory groups</p> <p>Mark Dorrington proposed and Sheila Gore seconded Rich Ackroyd as Leader of the Council. Agreed unanimously.</p> <p>Rich Ackroyd proposed and John Nelson seconded Anne Hills as Deputy Leader of the Council. Agreed unanimously.</p>	

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	<p>Mark Dorrington proposed and Ali Barclay seconded that all members of the Council are members of both the Council Matters Committee, the Town Matters Committee and the Planning Advisory Board. Agreed unanimously.</p> <p>Mark Dorrington proposed and Andy Palmer seconded:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ali Barclay, Sheila Gore, Rich Ackroyd, Andy Wrintmore and John Nelson as members of the Grants Advisory Board Agreed unanimously. <p>Rich Ackroyd proposed and Scott Ward seconded:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Sheila Gore as Chair of the Council Matters committee and Maxine Crawley was as Deputy Chair. 3. Ali Barclay as Chair of the Town Matters committee and Sara Butler as Deputy Chair. 4. Steve Tanner as Chair of the Planning Advisory Group and to defer the election of a Deputy Chair 5. Defer the decision to elect Chair of the Grants Advisory Committee. 6. Defer the decision to elect Lead Cllrs. <p>All agreed unanimously.</p>	
2019/07/FC	<p>7. Deciding on the calendar of meetings for 2019-20</p> <p>The recommendation was that Cllrs agree the calendar of meetings for 2019-20.</p> <p>Proposed by Scott Ward, seconded by John Nelson. Agreed unanimously.</p>	
2019/08/FC	<p>8. For information - Presentation by the FTC management group to review the Work Programme for 2018-19</p> <p>Anna Francis, Resilience Manager, presented on behalf of the management group and summarised the successes in all areas of the work programme.</p> <p>Lizzie Boyle congratulated the whole staff team at FTC. She said she was looking forward to working with an incredibly creative and</p>	

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	productive team whose level of expertise was unique in the parish sector.	
2019/09/FC	<p>9a. For decision – Approval of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) 2018-19</p> <p>Sarah Williams presented the item and explained the importance of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return</p> <p>The recommendation was:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 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. <p>Proposed by Sheila Gore, seconded by Anne Hills, agreed unanimously.</p>	
2019/10/FC	<p>9b. For decision - Approval of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) 2018-19</p> <p>Cllrs considered the Accounting Statements, which were presented by Sarah Williams.</p> <p>The recommendations were:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Note that the Responsible Finance Officer has certified that the accounting statements fairly represent the financial position of Frome Town Council. 3. Instruct the Chair and the RFO to sign on behalf of the Council that they have approved the accounting statements. <p>Proposed by Ali Barclay, seconded by Sheila Gore, agreed unanimously.</p>	
2019/11/FC	<p>9c. For decision - Annual Governance and Accountability Return</p> <p>The recommendations were:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Approve the Earmarked Reserves for the start of the financial year. 5. Note the amount in the General Reserve at the start of the financial year. <p>Proposed by Sara Butler, seconded by Anne Hills, agreed unanimously.</p>	
2019/12/FC	<p>10. For decision – Adopting the Council’s Financial Regulations</p>	

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	<p>Sarah Williams noted that suggestions for minor changes had been made by some Cllrs and suggested that these could be discussed in more detail at the next Council Matters Committee meeting.</p> <p>The recommendation was:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Approve the Financial Regulations <p>This was proposed by John Nelson, seconded by Maxine Crawley and agreed unanimously.</p>	
2019/13/FC	<p>11. For Decision – Commissioning a study into the feasibility of turning the former Weston Warehouse at Saxonvale into a new cultural destination</p> <p>Peter Wheelhouse presented the report. He recapped the cultural/community quarter idea discussed at the Town Matters meeting of 24 April.</p> <p>Interested parties include Black Swan Arts, who would like to create two new galleries, an educational space, more incubation spaces for artists and other features. Frome Museum were interested in more gallery space. Frome Weavers were also looking to secure a permanent location where they could bring Frome’s textile heritage to life.</p> <p>Site owner Mendip District Council and developer Acorn Property Group have confirmed they will entertain an expression of interest for the site which faces onto a proposed public square.</p> <p>Peter explained that a feasibility study would improve understanding of the costs involved for acquiring, fitting out and operating the building. Peter recommended that FTC play an enabling role by funding the feasibility study using the receipt from the sale of FTC land at Saxonvale.</p> <p>Nick White suggested Black Swan Arts and the Museum could pay back the money spent on the study to FTC, perhaps with the receipt from the sale of their current premises.</p> <p>Ali Barclay raised concerns about the potential loss of the current Black Swan Arts building. The individual from Black Swan Arts explained that while it is a great building it was very hard to deliver what they wanted because of the layout and design. She also said disabled access to parts of the current building was very poor.</p> <p>District Cllr Helen Sprawson-White wondered whether MDC could contribute to the cost of the feasibility study. Peter said that would be welcome. Paul Wynne said that since FTC are already on the</p>	

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	<p>project group at MDC and under urgency from the developers, he would recommend that funding the feasibility study was approved tonight but that there would still be opportunities for discussion between the councils.</p> <p>Rob Collett asked about environmental sustainability and Peter said the selected consultants would be instructed to ensure the building was as sustainable as possible.</p> <p>The recommendations were:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Delegate authority to the Deputy Town Clerk in consultation with the (to be appointed) lead Cllr for Saxonvale, Black Swan Arts and Frome Museum to prepare a brief and commission the feasibility study into the cultural/community use of the former Weston Warehouse at Saxonvale 2. Set up an EMR of £15,000 for this purpose utilising the capital receipt from the sale of FTC land at Saxonvale 3. Report back to Cllrs on the outcomes of the feasibility study <p>These were proposed by Sara Butler, seconded by John Nelson and agreed unanimously.</p> <p>Paul Horton was nominated to be Lead Cllr on the Saxonvale project and sit on the Saxonvale board at MDC.</p> <p>This was proposed by Andy Palmer, seconded by Ali Barclay, and agreed unanimously.</p>	
2019/14/FC	<p>12. For decision – Approving the Risk Strategy, including the Action Plan for 2019/20, and ratifying the Action Plan for 2018/19</p> <p>Paul Wynne presented the report. He explained that it was important to manage rather than remove risk and that risk assessments are conducted for many different reasons and projects.</p> <p>Sheila Gore complimented Chris Stringer who tables site risk assessments to Council Matters. Gill Fone asked if FTC could put disclaimers on their land, saying people using the open space at Foundry Barton were often seen climbing over the fence. She asked if FTC was liable for any injuries. Paul explained that FTC is liable and has insurance to cover such occurrences and that disclaimers have no legal status.</p> <p>The recommendations were:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Chair to sign the 2019/20 Action Plan on behalf of the Council and approve the 2019/20 Risk Strategy document. 	

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	<p>2. The Chair to sign the 2018/19 Action Plan on behalf of the Council.</p> <p>These were proposed by Rob Collett, seconded by Maxine Crawley and agreed unanimously.</p>	
2019/15/FC	The next meeting will be at 7pm on Wednesday 17 July 2019 at Frome Town Hall	

The Chair closed the meeting at 8:58pm.

DRAFT