

FROME TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the Council Matters Committee

Wednesday 20 February 2019 at 7pm

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

Present:

Councillors: Sheila Gore (Chair), Toby Eliot, Pippa Goldfinger, Mel Usher

In attendance:

Chris Stringer (Clerk; Environment Manager), Sarah Williams (Business Manager), Chloe Bray (Executive Assistant to the Town Clerk), Laura Hales (Marketing and Communications Assistant), Mark Dorrington (FTC Cllr), Adam Boyden (MDC Cllr), PC Simon Humphrey (Police Officer), PC Victoria Ward (Police Officer)

4 members of the public

Minute Ref	Agenda Item	Action
2019/59/CM	The meeting started at 7.03pm 1a. Apologies for absence Received from Richard Ackroyd, Kate Bielby, Colin Cobb, Gary Collinson, Peter Macfadyen, Cath Puddick, Heather Wride 1b. Declaration of members' interests None was received 1c. Minutes from the last meeting on 19 December 2019 The minutes of the Council Matters Committee meeting held on 19 December 2019 were approved as a true record of the meeting and signed by the Chair. Proposed by Toby Eliot, seconded by Pippa Goldfinger, agreed unanimously.	
2019/60/CM	2. Questions and comments from the public and Cllrs Gill Fone brought up the lights along Zion Path. She noted that Light 3 was still not working, while Light 4 on Cork Street has been fixed. Gill also said she was pleased to see the space where the Cork Street toilet had been being used, having been tarmacked over and now sufficient for 2 buses to park. She asked if there was any update on the plan for offices made from recycled shipping containers at the Cattle Market Yard car park. Mel Usher said there were no new updates. Mark Dorrington said thank you on behalf of the Orchard Street allotment site tenants for recent pruning by the Town Rangers.	

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	He also asked when the dog bin in the Trinity Area would be replaced. Chris Stringer informed him that Mendip District Council is responsible for the bin and agreed to contact them. At the end of the meeting - following the agenda items - Mel Usher acknowledged the presence of 2 police officers at the meeting, saying it was great that they had attended. He asked them for any updates on crime in Frome. PC Simon Humphrey introduced himself and colleague PC Victoria Ward as Beat Managers for the town. He spoke about recent robberies targeting Frome shops, noting that one suspect had been arrested on Christmas Day and others had been arrested since. He explained that the prosecution process was ongoing, and the arrests were good news for the town. Mel enquired into reports of fires in the Trinity area. Simon explained that the police were working hard in the area, offering advice to residents, and had filmed for Crimewatch earlier in the week with Sgt. Rachel Clark. He added that there had been no recent fires in the area. Adam Boyden voiced concerns on the police operating from a new police station in Shepton Mallet later this year and asked about the responsibilities of the various teams within the police force. Simon explained that the neighborhood team would remain working remotely in Frome and would only need to go to Shepton Mallet if an arrest was made or to submit items for evidence. He added that funding cuts meant they no longer had funding for some teams, e.g. dedicated drugs teams, so response officers had a large responsibility. He said the job of the neighborhood team was to reduce crime through offender management, which often took a proactive approach. A member of the public brought up that an individual responsible for recent burglaries had been released on bail twice. Simon explained that the decision was made by the court. He described consultation taking place with local shopkeepers that may lead to pursuing Criminal Behaviour Orders based on the stress and upset caused by the incidents. Victoria added that impact statements taken by police wouldn't keep an offender in custody but may influence the punishment decided on in courts.	CS
2019/61/CM	3. DEFERRED: For decision – the new building for Victoria Park, combining new public toilets and a café space This item was deferred to a future meeting as a new design was in progress.	CS

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2019/62/CM	4. For decision – floodlighting the tennis courts at Mary Baily playing field Chris Stringer presented the report and noted that the proposal was the result of a previous meeting with Frome Tennis Club where the tennis club was asked to bring a project idea back to the council. Chris said the decision was not a straightforward one as the tennis club asked FTC to support the floodlighting project but consultation efforts had resulted in low engagement and mixed feedback. He explained that FTC could try to re-engage the local community. However, 200 letters had already been sent out to the surrounding area yielding only 13 responses. Chris said the next steps were to work with the club to increase local engagement in consultations with the aim of gaining more feedback and then would bring the matter back to Council Matters. Gill Fone asked if the lights would be kept on when the courts weren't in use. Mark Brierley confirmed that they would not. Sheila Gore expressed disappointment that the courts were not used more. She wondered if they could be promoted more. Sheila said she would be more likely to support the plan to floodlight the tennis courts if they were more widely used. Mel Usher proposed that the third recommendation be amended to read: Delegate responsibility to the Environment Manager to present an update on this project at a future Council meeting once additional community engagement efforts have been completed and before starting the planning process The amendment was proposed by Mel Usher, seconded by Pippa Goldfinger. Agreed unanimously. The amended recommendations were: 1. Support the tennis club to further engage with local people. 2. Subject to the response to the engagement exercise, delegate responsibility to the Environment Manager to act as main contact for the tennis club at this stage of the project. 3. Delegate responsibility to the Environment Manager to present an update on this project at a future Council meeting once additional community engagement efforts have been completed and before starting the planning process.	CS

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	Proposed by Mel Usher, seconded by Pippa Goldfinger and agreed unanimously.	
2019/63/CM	5. For decision – new server and storing emails on the cloud Sarah William presented the report, recommending that emails be put on the cloud. She explained that quotes had been received from various companies in Frome. She also recommended that a new server was leased or purchased for all other IT requirements. Toby Eliot asked why the proposal wasn't to hold all data on the cloud. Pippa Goldfinger suggested a cloud based system would be more secure. Sarah said she would investigate further a cloud based server. If the cost difference was less than £1000, she asked, could she go ahead with purchasing? Cllrs agreed that a purchasing decision could go ahead if there was a cost difference of under £1000, otherwise the decision should be brought to a future meeting. The recommendations were: 1. The purchase of a new IT server– leaving the decision on lease purchase or cash purchase or on the cloud up to the RFO in consultation with the lead Cllrs for finance. 2. Moving all FTC email address holders onto the Office 365 platform as soon as possible. The decision was proposed by Toby Eliot, seconded by Pippa Goldfinger, agreed unanimously.	SW
2019/64/CM	7. For decision – finance update Sarah Williams presented the report. Mel Usher congratulated Sarah on taking over from Jacky Wheeler and thanked her for being so transparent on financial matters. Sarah said credit for the bookkeeping should also go to Hannah Paniccia, Finance Administrator. Pippa Goldfinger noted that Hannah started working at Frome Town Council as an apprentice and it was fantastic to see her progress. The recommendations were to approve: 1. The Internal Auditors' report 2. Income and Expenditure Sheet 3. Balance sheet, including the breakdown of reserves 4. Payments made over £500 5. Year-end budget forecast	

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	Proposed by Mel Usher, seconded by Toby Eliot, agreed unanimously.	
2019/65/CM	6. For decision – the management and improvement plan for the Old Showfield Chris Stringer presented the report. He noted that the Old Showfield, along with Victoria Park, was one of the largest sites managed by Frome Town Council. He said the proposed next steps weren't expensive, both financially and in relation to time commitment. Adam Boyden said he had conducted a survey on Twitter, which contacted slightly over 100 people. He received 55 responses, with 29 responders including comments. Of the responses, all but 2 agreed they were "very satisfied" with the changes made so far. Sheila Gore asked why the fence was not currently circuiting the playground. Chris explained that there was hedging rather than fencing in some areas for landscaping reasons and said he would look into investing in gates to fill the gaps in fencing. Mel Usher congratulated Chris and the Town Rangers on the success of the space and the improvements made. He noted that the site had been poorly maintained before FTC took over management and it now looks well cared for and is used much more. The recommendations were: 1. Adopt the updated management plan for the Old Showfield 2. Adopt the site risk assessments for the Old Showfield 3. Approve the scheduled review date for the above plan 4. Approve the scheduled annual review of the above site risk assessments 5. Delegate responsibility to the Environment Manager to deliver the plan 6. Delegate responsibility to the Environment Manager to keep the site risk assessments up to date in-between approval and the (scheduled) annual review Proposed by Sheila Gore, seconded by Pippa Goldfinger, agreed unanimously.	CS
2019/66/CM	8. For decision – approval of the Community Engagement Strategy and staff expenses policy Mel Usher suggested that in future revisions of Chapter 19 – Community Engagement Strategy – we could widen the scope of what is meant by community engagement. It was agreed to pass on these comments to Paul Wynne, Town Clerk.	PWY

29/5/19
Sheila M. Gore

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	The recommendation was: 1. Approve the Community Engagement Strategy and the staff expenses policy chapters listed as part of the Constitution Proposed by Pippa Goldfinger, seconded by Sheila Gore, agreed unanimously.	
2019/67/CM	9. For information – Health & Safety update Chris presented the report, noting that there had been further damage at Frome Town Hall – both car park pillars have now been damaged in separate accidents. He also noted a recent accident outside the Town Hall during snowy conditions, which is being discussed with the person who fell on the pavement. Adam Boyden asked who was responsible if the cold snap continues. He asked if the Town Rangers could take on any responsibility and if there was a shared sense on risk. Chris said that he would bring a report to a future meeting about detailing FTC's response in cold weather and he noted that the majority of the responsibility lies with Mendip District Council and Somerset County Council.	CS
2018/68/CM	The next meeting will be at 7pm on Wednesday 29 May 2019 at Frome Town Hall	

The Chair closed the meeting at 7.54pm.

29/5/19
Sheila M. Gore