

FROME TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the Town Matters Committee

Wednesday 24 April 2019 at 7pm

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

Present:

Councillors: Gary Collinson (Chair), Rich Ackroyd, Ali Barclay, Kate Bielby, Colin Cobb, Mark Dorrington, Sheila Gore, Al O'Kane, Mel Usher, Nick White, Toby Eliot, Pippa Goldfinger, Peter Macfadyen

In attendance: Paul Wynne (Town Clerk), Chloe Bray (Executive Assistant to the Town Clerk and Mayor), Peter Wheelhouse (Deputy Town Clerk and Economic Development & Regeneration Manager), Chris Stringer (Environment Manager), Vivienne Whitaker (Community Projects Officer), Rachel Griffin (Marketing & Communications Manager), Kate Hellard (Community Development Manager), June Barnes (Frome Carnival), Julie Carey-Downes (Health Connections Mendip), Amanda Sheridan (Black Swan Arts), Stina Falle (Mendip District Council), Des Harris (Mendip District Council), Neil Howlett (Frome Chamber of Commerce)

8 members of the public

Minute Ref	Agenda Item	Action
2018/64/TM	<p>The meeting started at 7.05pm</p> <p>1a. Apologies for absence Received from Tricia Golinski.</p> <p>1b. Declaration of members' interests None were received</p> <p>1c. Minutes from the last meeting on 6 February 2019 The minutes to the last Town Matters Committee meeting on 6 February 2019 were proposed by Rich Ackroyd, seconded by Mark Dorrington and agreed unanimously.</p>	
2018/65/TM	<p>2. Questions and comments from the public and Cllrs</p> <p>Des Harris asked about the dog bin that had vandalised and taken away some time ago at Trinity Church car park. Chris Stringer explained that FTC have offered a spare bin to MDC, who have been invited to collect the bin and install it at any time.</p> <p>Nick White also raised the issue of a dog bin that had been taken away from the bottom of Gypsy Lane. Chris said he would take this up.</p>	CS

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2018/66/TM	<p>3. For information - Q&A session with Multi-Year Agreement (MYA) recipient, Frome Carnival</p> <p>June Barnes from the Frome Carnival committee gave a brief explanation of what the carnival does and welcomed questions. She said the Carnival committee were extremely grateful for the funding from FTC, which has enabled them to pay for more entertainment, especially bands. She explained that the carnival costs between £10K and £12K annually to put on, and raises money for the carnival's own charity, which is then used to support local projects and people all year round.</p> <p>Gary asked if Frome Carnival work with any other organisations. June said they work with Frome Rotary and the Lions. She added that there were only 10 people of the carnival committee, so volunteers were always welcomed to help with the set-up and running of the carnival.</p> <p>June acknowledged that the MYA was in it's final year. The biggest funding difficulty was the perception that the carnival is just 1 day per year, when in fact the organisation works year-round and supports smaller projects in the town.</p> <p>Mel Usher asked how much money the carnival collects each year. June said the total was usually around £4,000-£5,000 but the bad weather last year had seen donations fall to around £2,000. The money goes in the Frome Carnival charity.</p>
2018/67/TM	<p>4. For information - Q&A session with Multi-Year Agreement (MYA) recipient, Health Connections Mendip</p> <p>Julie Carey-Downes of Health Connections Mendip gave an overview of the organization, it's partnerships, and success to date.</p> <p>She highlighted the importance of the Community Connectors trained by Health Connections Mendip, who provide vital signposting to local services. In addition to signposting online, people can find out about the services they can access through a dedicated phone number, and through regular Talking Café's, thereby being able to reach people who do not use the internet.</p> <p>The Talking Café has been so popular that it now runs in 2 local venues – the Cheese & Grain and the No. 5 Café. There are currently 1097 community connectors, including 668 in Frome and the surrounding villages.</p>

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	<p>The local police have received training which they found “very useful and accessible”, and now refer people to connectors. Health Connections Mendip tailor training to suit different organizations and will be looking to add more training packages soon.</p> <p>A member of the public asked about the initial MYA goal to deliver “TED-style talks” on the service. Julie explained they had tried these and have not found them as effective as initially hoped. Therefore, they now focus on delivering workplace training, and give talks to around 20-30 people at a time.</p> <p>Nick White asked if any other parish councils had provided funding. Julie said this wasn’t the case, but it was something they were looking into in Glastonbury, where they would be doing a talk later in the year.</p> <p>Mel Usher noted that the Multi-Year Agreements were now in their final year and Cllrs elected on May 2 would probably want to review MYA and the other grants in the next administration.</p>	
2018/68/TM	<p>5. For Decision – a proposed cultural/community quarter at Saxonvale</p> <p>Peter Wheelhouse introduced the report, which gave an overview of the plan for a cultural/community quarter at Saxonvale, the reasons to support the idea, and the next steps.</p> <p>He said the success of town centres depends on the quality of experiences on offer. He said discussions were ongoing with Black Swan Arts who are keen to expand and whose aim was to create two new galleries, an educational resource, a new shop and new café.</p> <p>Frome Museum are also interested in the proposal and so are smaller organisation such as Frome Weavers. The Silk Mill are interested in expanding, and currently have a waiting list of 81 businesses which they don’t have the space to accommodate. Peter explained that two existing buildings on the site – the former Weston Warehouse building and Notts Industries Offices – could provide the space needed.</p> <p>He introduced Amanda Sheridan from Black Swan Arts who noted that BSA don’t have the expertise needed to secure a space at Saxonvale which was why they’re working with Frome Town Council.</p>	

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	<p>Peter said a feasibility study was needed before investment due to the complexity of the project.</p> <p>Neil Howlett of Frome Chamber of Commerce said that the Chamber, Frome Civic Society, and Peter Wheelhouse would continue to put pressure on MDC. He said arts and crafts spaces had a proven economic benefit for the town. He supported the proposal for a feasibility study.</p> <p>Peter also expressed concerns about the amount of non-residential space planned for the site, which was circa 45,000 sq. ft, whereas FTC felt there was potential for circa 80,000 sq. ft.</p> <p>Colin Cobb said the cultural space allocation should be categorised separately to commercial space by Acorn. Peter said that Acorn had suggested that 20,000 sq. ft would be dedicated to cultural space in addition to the 45,000 sq. ft already planned for non-residential space.</p> <p>Colin suggested MDC should pay for surveys and share the results.</p> <p>Mel Usher wondered whether Black Swan Arts and Frome Museum would sell their current buildings in order to help fund the project. He also said that the cultural quarter would make an excellent Section 106 funded scheme.</p> <p>The following amendment was made to the recommendations: Change the wording of recommendation 1b to reflect an aim to secure "the maximum possible amount of non-residential space", rather than the initial wording of securing "more non-residential space".</p> <p>The amendment was proposed by Colin Cobb, seconded by Kate Bielby and agreed unanimously.</p> <p>The amended recommendations were:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Authority is delegated to the Deputy Town Clerk to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. represent the interests of local creative/community organisations in negotiations with MDC and Acorn Property Group b. try to secure the maximum possible amount of non-residential space within the Saxonvale scheme and the ringfencing of specific buildings for cultural/community use 2. Bring a report back to councillors setting out proposals for the funding of essential feasibility studies 	<p>PWh</p>
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	This was proposed by Kate Bielby, seconded by Colin Cobb and agreed unanimously.	
2018/69/TM	<p>6. For decision – the town’s response to wintry conditions</p> <p>Chris String presented the report, which had been brought about by one occurrence in 2019 and two occurrences in 2018 of snow and ice causing disruption in the town. He said SCC were looking to review their winter service and welcomed the comments of FTC and the rest of the town, although it was unclear whether they would conduct a public consultation.</p> <p>The six tables were invited to discuss the report and future action for five minutes and then present their views to the chair.</p> <p>Table 1 wanted more grit bins to empower the community to help themselves and felt making the pavements safe was important. Table 2 were in support of a “Snow Warriors” scheme following the success of the Litter Warriors project. Table 3 said it was important to encourage neighbours to check on vulnerable and isolated individuals in periods of poor weather.</p> <p>Table 4 said a network of communication was needed so that people could find out which services were still open and running. Table 5 had concerns about volunteers of a “Snow Wardens” scheme being at risk of injury and that smaller bags of grit could be stored by volunteers. Table 6 felt that grit bins weren’t often in the most useful locations.</p> <p>Neil Howlett said the Frome Facebook group had been an excellent resource during bad weather, and that FTC should publicise services like the Wessex 4x4 group and others who provide transport for key workers who would otherwise be unable to get to work.</p> <p>Chris thanked everyone for their feedback.</p> <p>The recommendations were:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Agree a maximum sum of £3,500 (funded from the existing Community Open Spaces budget) for re-stocking grit bins and buying new grit bins during the current financial year 2. Allocate FTC staff time to contribute to SCC’s review of its winter service, including allocating FTC staff time producing a detailed map of the town, cross-referencing the locations of the town’s grit bins with roads, footpaths, cycle routes etc. 3. Develop the Winter Warriors or Snow Warden scheme, delegating responsibility to the Environment Manager to 	

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	<p>prepare a follow-up report on this, including a costed feasibility study</p> <p>4. In conjunction with Recommendation 3, look at the (wider) opportunity of a Parish Ranger, detailing how and where this role could provide extra support in wintry conditions</p> <p>This was proposed by Kate Bielby, seconded by Colin Cobb and agreed unanimously.</p>	CS
2018/70/TM	<p>7. For information – update on projects with the business community</p> <p>Vivienne Whitaker presented an update on her work, including projects both led and supported by Frome Town Council.</p> <p>She explained Business Breakfasts, Discuss & Do and Soul Traders, which were all going steady and popular with attendees. She said she has supported the annual Frome Busks and the International Women's Day conference.</p> <p>The recent Apprenticeship conference had also made it clear that local businesses were interested in other ways to involve young people such as careers fairs, mock interviews and traineeships.</p> <p>Neil Howlett thanked Vivienne and FTC on behalf of Frome Chamber of Commerce.</p> <p>Rich Ackroyd thanked Vivienne for her work over the last 6 months, he congratulated her on her hard work and the great ideas being developed.</p>	
2018/71/TM	The next meeting will be at 7pm on Wednesday 19 June 2019 at Frome Town Hall	

The Chair closed the meeting at 8:49pm