

FROME TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of an Extraordinary meeting of Frome Town Council

Monday 28 October 2019 at 7pm

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

Present:

Councillors: Ali Barclay, Lizzie Boyle, Rob Collett, Anita Collier (Chair), Sheila Gore, Anne Hills, Paul Horton, Andy Palmer, Scott Ward, Andy Wrintmore

In attendance:

Peter Wheelhouse (Economic Development & Regeneration Manager & Deputy Town Clerk), Sarah Williams (Business Manager), Jane Llewellyn (Planning and Development Manager),

No members of the public were present

Minute Ref	Agenda Item	Action
2019/36/FC	<p>The meeting started at 7.00pm</p> <p>1a. Apologies for absence Mark Dorrington, Rich Ackroyd, John Nelson, Sara Butler, Steve Tanner, Maxine Crawley & Nick Dove</p> <p>1b. Declaration of members' interests None was received.</p>	
2019/37/FC	<p>2. Questions and comments from the public and Cllrs Anne Hills asked how widely the meeting had been publicised. Peter Wheelhouse confirmed that the meeting had been publicised as normal with full notification.</p> <p>The next two items to be considered in confidential session</p> <p>i. Whether to make an offer to purchase a property in the town ii. Whether to commission a feasibility study on another property in the town</p> <p>Rob Collett proposed that the meeting go into confidential session, seconded by Anne Hills, agreed unanimously. It was agreed that the items be considered in reverse order to the printed order.</p>	
2019/38/FC	<p>3. For decision – whether to commission a feasibility study on another property in the town Peter Wheelhouse presented a report proposing to commission a feasibility study on the former Weston Warehouse at Saxonvale. He confirmed that the owner, Mendip District Council (MDC) have agreed on a price for the freehold interest of the building (price not for publication) as a basis for further contract negotiations. MDC have indicated that they are prepared to enter into an exclusivity agreement that would provide a minimum of three months to</p>	

FROME TOWN COUNCIL

	<p>complete feasibility studies and give FTC first right to purchase the property should those studies confirm that we should proceed. Peter then outlined the next steps which are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sign the exclusivity agreement • Re-engage with prospective occupiers to better understand their requirements and the terms on which they would be prepared to get involved • Engage the wider community to win hearts and minds • An architectural feasibility study to involve architect and QS • Take further advice from a valuer around rental strategies • Obtain legal advice • Complete a business case • Complete contract negotiations with MDC <p>Andy Palmer arrived at 7.40pm.</p> <p>Following discussion, Rob Collett proposed that the recommended level of expenditure be increased from £20k to £22k to enable some community engagement work. The proposed amendment was seconded by Anne Hills and agreed unanimously.</p> <p>The recommendations were:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Agree the price for the Weston Warehouse as a basis for further contract negotiations (price not for publication) 2. Authority is given for expenditure up to £22k to fund feasibility work, on top of the £1550 already spent on feasibility studies (the £15K previously approved for the feasibility studies is included within the £22k) 3. Delegate to the Deputy Town Clerk in consultation with Cllr Paul Horton to implement next steps on this project 4. A report is brought back to Council to report on progress <p>The amended recommendations were proposed by Rob Collett, seconded by Anne Hills and agreed unanimously.</p>	
2019/39/FC	<p>4. For decision - Whether to make an offer to purchase a property in the town</p> <p>Peter Wheelhouse presented a report to Cllrs on whether to make an offer to purchase the former Jewson site at Station Approach and convert it for use as an enterprise centre. The presentation covered: why FTC should consider getting involved; a recommended vision; and some assumptions regarding current market rental levels. Peter then set out five possible costed options for FTC to pursue.</p>	

FROME TOWN COUNCIL

	<p>The vision that was presented was to deliver ‘A Frome Community Enterprise Centre promoting social, green and small businesses.’</p> <p>Following discussion, Rob Collett proposed an amendment to the recommendation which was to make an initial bid at a lower figure and cap the offer at a higher figure (figures not for publication). The amendment was seconded by Anne Hills and agreed unanimously.</p> <p>The recommendation was to delegate authority to the Deputy Town Clerk to submit an offer beginning with an initial bid of (price not for publication) and capped at (price not for publication) for the freehold interest subject to contract.</p> <p>The amended recommendation was proposed by Rob Collett, seconded by Anne Hills, agreed unanimously.</p>	
--	---	--

The Chair closed the meeting at 8.40pm