

FROME TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of Frome Town Council

Wednesday 18 November 2020 at 7pm
Zoom

Present:

Councillors: Ali Barclay, Lizzie Boyle, Sara Butler, Rob Collett, Anita Collier (Chair), Maxine Crawley, Mark Dorrington, Nick Dove, Sheila Gore, Anne Hills, Paul Horton, John Nelson, Andy Palmer, Steve Tanner, Andy Wrintmore

In attendance:

John Clarke (MDC/SCC Cllr), Shane Collins (MDC Cllr), Adam Boyden (MDC Cllr), Paul Wynne (Town Clerk), Sarah Williams (Business Manager), Rachel Griffin (Marketing and Communications Manager), Kate Hellard (Community Development Manager), Beccy Byrne (Marketing and Communications Officer), Laura Flaherty (Executive Assistant to the Town Clerk and Mayor)

6 members of the public

Minute Ref	Agenda Item	Action
2020/58/FC	<p>The meeting started at 7pm</p> <p>1a. Apologies for absence Received from Rich Ackroyd.</p> <p>1b. Declaration of members' interests None was received.</p> <p>1c. Minutes from the last meeting on 9 September 2020 The minutes of the Frome Town Council meeting held on 9 September 2020 were approved as a true record of the meeting and signed by the Chair.</p> <p>Proposed by John Nelson, seconded by Anne Hills, agreed unanimously</p>	
2020/59/FC	<p>2. Questions and comments from the public and Cllrs Adam Boyden confirmed that MDC's Cabinet would be having a meeting on 26 November at 6.30pm to reconsider their decision on social housing in Frome.</p>	
2020/60/FC	<p>3. A verbal update from Kate Hellard, Community Development Manager, on the work of the Council during the second lockdown Kate Hellard summarised the report and explained FTC had worked with partners in preparation for a 2nd wave and felt well prepared for the second lockdown. Active & In Touch had taken responsibility for the 'shop for me' service, which also came with a package of support</p>	

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	<p>around befriending. The prescription deliveries with Community Drivers was continuing.</p> <p>Kate was mapping the gaps that had developed due to the pandemic, with more far reaching impacts i.e., economic/job losses. There was an increase in enquiries around mental health, and Mindline Somerset was a 24/7 telephone helpline for adults and children which could be accessed locally. SCC were trialling support for young people, working with colleges and schools as they were starting to see the impact of the first lockdown. Kate thanked MDC and SCC for working collaboratively with FTC. It had made access and pathways for residents much easier.</p> <p>Rob Collett asked if there was an area FTC were not on the ball on? Kate said she would love to hear from anyone if there was something that wasn't happening. Kate said it was a testament to the town and the community that the community as a whole was in a good place. Kate's team were continuing to support the neighbourhood networks.</p> <p>Lizzie Boyle asked what was the expected impact of mental health and Christmas? Kate expected that the issues to be exacerbated over Christmas. FTC was working closely with Fair Frome to help cope with demand and prepare. An increase in demand from other services was also expected.</p> <p>Lenka Grimes asked in FTC's liaison with the police what was being done about anti-social behaviour? Kate explained FTC were supporting the police where appropriate, with our role about bringing relevant statutory services together and support them. Targeted youth services was currently being considered.</p> <p>Sheila Gore asked what homelessness provision there was for winter? Kate said that the Zero nights provided by Elim was running again. This service was effective as they also offered support and advice. Ali Barclay also noted Streetlink, the relevant contact info could be found on all the community noticeboards.</p>	
2020/61/FC	<p>4. For approval - The revised work programme taking into account Covid-19 impact and projects and to note the first year end budget forecast of the year</p> <p>Paul Wynne gave a summary of the report. He explained that the revised work programme was deliverable, dependent on some external grants, if these were unsuccessful the work would be reconsidered.</p> <p>Sarah Williams explained that there has been unexpected costs of £149k due to the coronavirus pandemic. There had been some</p>	

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	<p>budget cuts, some estimated savings, release of earmarked reserves and use of some of the general reserve.</p> <p>Lizzie Boyle congratulated everyone involved in steering the ship and to Sarah for making the numbers make sense. She asked if there would be a review of the market place phase 2 project? Peter Wheelhouse said he would be happy to bring a report and present a review including further information on likely overspend to a future meeting.</p> <p>Anne Hills noted how struck she was by the lack of amber and red in the RAG rating on the work programme. She said the management team had managed to deliver most of what was set out to achieve plus deal with the pandemic. Well done to all.</p> <p>The recommendations were:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Approve the work programme as amended at appendix 1 2. Release EMR 342 (Fireworks 2019) and EMR 335 (Town Hall marketing) and 3. Note that the first year-end forecast, seven months into the year, for a balanced budget with a General Reserve at year end forecast to be £202k. <p>Proposed by Lizzie Boyle, seconded by Sheila Gore, agreed by majority.</p>	SW
2020/62/FC	<p>5. For information - Update on the unitary process in Somerset Paul Wynne provided a summary of the report. He explained that there would be a unitary arrangement. The boundary of a new unitary was to be decided.. He noted it would markedly change the way local government would operate but there were significant opportunities for Frome. The biggest was the possibility of having more say in how things are done in the town.</p> <p>There were two options on the table:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Stronger Somerset – 2 unitaries under the current county boundaries. Frome would be under a merger of MDC and South Somerset 2. One Somerset – 1 unitary authority based in Taunton <p>A major achievement was that the recommendations from the parish sector had been adopted by both options. This was the first time in England that any unitary bid included the level of details over how a future unitary would work with the parish sector.</p> <p>The next steps were to keep up pressure and begin to explore what a new unitary might mean for Frome. Paul was working with SLCC on a “how to” guide for parish councils going through unitary process.</p>	

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	<p>Kate Hellard was beginning to think about the impact of a new unitary might impact on children and young people.</p> <p>Ali Barclay asked if there was a need to increase staff if more services were taken on by FTC? Paul said this would depend partly on whether FTC decided to take on services currently provided by the county and/or the district councils (e.g. , grounds maintenance and toilet blocks)</p> <p>John Clarke explained that SCC agreed for the Leader to write to the government to ask them to defer the county elections scheduled for May 2021. He confirmed that BANES would not be submitting any business case that would bring some or all of the current Mendip area under its control.. John asked FTC to engage with the community about what they would want from a new arrangement. Paul said this would be an essential step and FTC just needed to choose the right time.</p>	
2020/63/FC	<p>6. For decision - Approval of Risk Register 2020/21</p> <p>Sarah Williams gave a summary of the report. She noted that seven new rows had been added to the register specifically in relation to COVID-19 19.</p> <p>The recommendation was for the Chair to sign the 2020/21 Risk Register Summary & Action Plan on behalf of the Council and approve the 2020/21 Risk Strategy document.</p> <p>Proposed by Ali Barclay, seconded by Mark Dorrington, agreed unanimously.</p>	
2020/64/FC	<p>The next meeting will be at 7pm on Wednesday 20 January 2021, on Zoom</p>	

The Chair closed the meeting at 8.07pm