

Minutes of the Frome Annual Town Meeting at Frome Town Hall Wednesday 3 April 2019

In the chair: Rich Ackroyd, Mayor of Frome

In attendance:

Approx. 70 members of the public

Frome Town Councillors: Richard Ackroyd (Chair), Ali Barclay, Kate Bielby, Jean Boulton, Colin Cobb, Gary Collinson, Mark Dorrington, Toby Eliot, Pippa Goldfinger, Sheila Gore, Peter Macfadyen, Mel Usher, Nick White

Frome Town Council officers: Paul Wynne (Town Clerk), Rachel Griffin (Marketing and Communications Manager), Miles Macey (Executive Assistant to the Town Clerk and Mayor), Laura Hales (Marketing and Communications Officer), Kate Hellard (Community Development Manager)

Minutes

Before the meeting, attendees were welcomed with live music from the Frukes featuring Mayor Rich Ackroyd on his ukulele. The Frukes were followed by a short chair dance workout with Cheryl from Mojo Moves, one of the successful projects funded by the People's Budget 2018.

Minutes of the meeting held on 4 April 2018 were signed by the Chair as a true record of the meeting. They were proposed by a member of the public, seconded by Sheila Gore and agreed unanimously.

The meeting started: 7.10pm and Rich welcomed everyone to the Frome Annual Town meeting.

Questions and Comments from the Community

A member of the public asked about the bus stop at Cork Street, which had an outdated timetable and no shelter. The member of the public asked if an old bus shelter could be reused at Cork Street. Paul Wynne explained that Mendip District Councillor Des Harris is working with Mendip to install a bus shelter and an up to date timetable, and that FTC had already suggested using an old bus shelter.

Gill Fone asked about the area of the Cork Street car park where the old toilet block used to be, which was intended to be a coach park. Cars had been parking there as there were no markings to indicate the area was for coaches. Rich Ackroyd assured Gill that FTC would take this forward as part of the parking review and ask MDC to take action.

John Payne asked if FTC were trying to negotiate ownership of the old allotments site behind Broadway. He said FTC should try to acquire the land as it should belong to the people of Frome. Kate Hellard gave an update that following a community meeting in the Broadway area, residents voted to keep the site as a green space, and had been in discussion with FTC, MDC and SCC about protecting the site as a green space for the community.

Presentation from Cllr Rich Ackroyd on his year as Mayor

Rich shared the highlights of his year as Mayor, which included a plethora of different events all over the town. As well as the annual highlights such as Window Wanderland and Frome's Remembrance Service, Rich was invited to events by community groups, sports clubs and local charities throughout the year.

A particular highlight was Frome's Christmas Extravaganza, standing on the George Balcony with record breaker and local fundraiser Sergeant Rachel Clark and watching the lantern procession for Light the Night. There were many launches to attend as well, including the launch of Frome Powerchair Football Club and the opening of the new Community Larder. Another highlight was seeing Frome schools come together for an anti-bullying march organised by local students.

Cycling was a big part of the Mayor's year, including a 1,270 mile journey taking the longer way from Lands End to John O'Groats to highlight the need to connect Frome with the Colliers Way path for a traffic-free route into the centre of town. Rich fundraised for Frome's Missing Links on the way and was joined by Frome cyclists as he reached the town on day seven of his journey.

Rich's presentation wouldn't be complete without thanking Deputy Mayor Mark Dorrington and the staff at Frome Town Council for their hard work, support and passion for seeing the town thrive.

Presentation from Cllr Kate Bielby, Leader of the Council

Leader of the Council, Cllr Kate Bielby shared her reflections on a busy year for the Town Council in a difficult climate with local government funding cuts and many huge global and national issues. Frome Town Council's response has been to continue to be ambitious for Frome: acquiring, improving and managing green open spaces, continuing to invest in the town and taking action by declaring a climate emergency and setting a target to become carbon neutral by 2030.

Helping others to succeed has also been key, achieved by grant aiding just under £154,000 to local organisations through the community grant scheme, the Mayor's small grants and through the People's Budget, offering training, one-to-one support and fundraising advice. FTC continues to work hard to engage the community on key issues such as car parking, litter and crime, consultations to hear what people want to see in their town, as well as events to bring everyone together. Frome has also been an inspiration to others, such as Manchester

City Council with the School Active Travel Challenge and the community fridge encouraging another 50 fridges to get started around the country.

Presentation of the Mayor's Civic Awards

Rich chose five fantastic individuals who he felt have provided inspiration to Frome in many different ways.

Eleven-year-old Isla Stockdale Coates for her anti-bullying campaign, which resulted in a march by over 400 pupils from 11 local schools helping to raise awareness and take a stand. She received her award at school.

Ron Stone, who turns 100 this year, served in the 44th Royal Marines Commando before returning to Frome and working for many years at Butler and Tanner. He is featured in the Working Memories Frome project and treated the room to a song he and made up when he was based in Burma during the war about missing Frome.

Karen Stewart received her award for being such an active member of the Frome community. She is chair of Trinity Community Group, a trustee of Fair Frome, lead on the Access for All campaign, and a presenter on Frome FM's On-Air Book Group.

Bob Morris is chairman of the Frome Festival, now in its 19th year. A much-anticipated highlight for the town, each year the Festival showcases talent across the arts alongside global superstars, as well as bringing new visitors to Frome. Marjorie Morris is the leader of the Society of Disabled Artists' Frome branch, a member of Frome Save the Children and the sponsorship team for the Frome Festival.

The People's Budget 2018 Winners

The meeting ended with refreshments and a chance to see videos from Frome Fireworks, Frome Window Wanderland and Frome Light the Night, all winners of the People's Budget 2018 which showed the real impact each project had on the community.

The meeting finished at 8:50pm.