

FROME TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the Council Matters Committee

Wednesday 6 November 2019 at 7pm

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

Present:

Councillors: Richard Ackroyd, Ali Barclay, Rob Collett, Anita Collier, Maxine Crawley, Mark Dorrington, Nick Dove, Sheila Gore (chair), Paul Horton, Steve Tanner, Andy Wrintmore

In attendance:

Shane Collins (MDC Cllr), Paul Wynne (Town Clerk), Chris Stringer (Environment Manager), Sarah Williams (Business Manager), Sean Powell (Town Hall Steward), Laura Flaherty (Executive Assistant to the Town Clerk and Mayor)

3 members of the public

Minute Ref	Agenda Item	Action
2019/27/CM	<p>The meeting started at 7pm</p> <p>1a. Apologies for absence Received from Lizzie Boyle, Sara Butler, Anne Hills and John Nelson.</p> <p>1b. Declaration of members' interests None was received.</p> <p>1c. Minutes from the last meeting on 11 September 2019 The minutes of the Council Matters Committee meeting held on 11 September 2019 were approved as a true record of the meeting and signed by the Chair.</p> <p>Proposed by Nick Dove, seconded by Rich Ackroyd, agreed unanimously.</p>	
2019/28/CM	<p>2. Questions and comments from the public and Cllrs Rich Ackroyd asked what progress had been made on the maintenance and repairs at Château Gontier Walk. Chris Stringer agreed that Château Gontier was most in need of some attention. He noted the current problem was that the fence near to the riverbank was vandalized as soon as it was repaired. He explained that alternative options were being looked into like a welded fence. He noted that costings for a new fence as well as a wider plan for the walk would be brought to a future Council Matters meeting.</p> <p>Nick Dove requested that the vandalism at Chauteau Gontier Walk be considered as part of a bigger picture of vandalism in the town centre.</p>	CS

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	<p>Anita Collier asked if Chateau Goniter Walk and Murrhardt Gardens were marked as places dedicated to the twin towns. Chris Stringer noted there was a stone and plaque at the sites. He said new markers could be discussed with the Twinning Association.</p> <p>Rich Ackroyd asked that the CCTV coverage of the Community Fridge and Co Wheels car was considered as part of the CCTV review. Paul Wynne noted he was meeting with lead officer of Mendip CCTV the week after the Council Matters meeting. The current agreement would end in March 2020.</p> <p>Shane Collins, Mendip Cllr gave an update. He noted that the County and District climate group now had a framework and policy ready for consultation, it had been put back because of election.</p> <p>Nick Dove asked if a bin could be replaced at the bottom of Gentle Street leading to Church Steps. Chris String said he would speak to MDC about it.</p>	<p>PWy</p> <p>CS</p>
<p>2019/29/CM</p>	<p>3. For decision - The Management & Improvement Plan for Weylands</p> <p>Chris Stringer gave an overview of the management plan. He explained that the last plan was reviewed eighteen months ago and the majority of items on the to do list had been completed. The next steps for Weylands included Wild about Trees planting, Wild about Frome grass cuts, new Ranger-made timber benches, more community stewardship; and more partnership working. Chris said the most significant change would be the Wild About Trees project that would see more tree planting. Chris was exploring how this could be achieved with the Woodland Trust. The hope was to create a new native woodland.</p> <p>A member of the public asked how Chris intended to protect newly planted trees from vandals? Chris said the idea would be to plant a significant number of smaller trees (whips). If some were lost, through vandalism, there should still be a large number to go on. He would also fence the entire area or have individual guards.</p> <p>Sheila Gore asked about the fencing along the river edge and noted its poor condition. Chris explained the fencing was historic and put in by Sustrans. He explained that FTC had no obligation to fence the riverbank. However, the Rangers would look at repairing existing fencing as part of the maintenance in Weylands.</p> <p>Steve Tanner asked Chris if FTC were legally responsible if someone was to fall into the river. Chris said there was not a straightforward answer. He explained a part of his job was to manage risk in the open spaces FTC look after and has a duty of care. He also noted there was an element of what is reasonable and sensible to do. A fence alone</p>	

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	<p>should not indicate to people that is not safe to walk close to the edge of a riverbank. Everyone has common sense and a knowledge of what is dangerous.</p> <p>Shane Collins suggested installing hedging instead of repairing a fence. Chris explained that canals, for example, were not fenced because people know it is hazardous, this thinking could also be applied to riverbanks.</p> <p>Maxine Crawley pointed out that falls into the river were covered in Chris' very extensive and thorough risk assessment as part of the management plan.</p> <p>The recommendations were:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Adopt the updated management plan for Weylands 2. Adopt the site risk assessment for Weylands and the site risk assessment for the nearby path 3. Approve the scheduled review dates for the plan 4. Approve the scheduled annual review of the 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 reviews <p>Proposed by Nick Dove, seconded by Maxine Crawley, agreed unanimously.</p>	<p>CS</p> <p>CS</p>
<p>2019/30/CM</p>	<p>4. For Information - An update on the town's parks and green spaces Chris Stringer gave an overview of the report.</p> <p>Rob Collett asked whether the cancelled fireworks would still be going ahead? Chris explained the fireworks had only be postponed. Unfortunately, it was not possible to rearrange before Christmas however alternative dates in January were being explored.</p> <p>Nick Dove passed on thanks from a member of the public who wanted to thank FTC for their support of the weekend Park Run's at the Showfield. Chris noted how pleased he was with how well the runs were going.</p> <p>As part of the update Chris explained he was looking into the replacement of the skatepark ramp at Mary Baily. Sheila Gore passed on a comment from Lizzie Boyle who requested Chris explore play equipment had accessibility for both boys and girls in mind. Chris said this was always a part of the planning for creating new play</p>	

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	<p>opportunities. They were always inclusive of gender, age and abilities. He would also consult with the local community before any new play equipment or spaces were created.</p> <p>Lenka Grimes thanked FTC for the planting at New Road along with Fair Frome. She said it was an inclusive and accessible event.</p> <p>Anita Collier asked if FTC were responsible for any streetlights? Chris explained only the few that were on FTC land.</p> <p>Paul Wynne advised Cllrs not to take on the responsibility of streetlights off FTC land. They were expensive and then there would be an expectation that FTC would take on more.</p>	
<p>2019/31/CM</p>	<p>5. For approval - Financial update to 30 September 2019 Sarah Williams gave an overview of the report. She explained that nine staff laptops would need replacing by January 2020 as Windows 7 would no longer be supported. It was not possible to upgrade the laptops to Windows 10.</p> <p>Nick Dove asked if tablets had been considered as a cheaper alternative. Sarah said this had not been thought of it and would investigate the possibility.</p> <p>Andy Wrintmore felt the decision about a laptop or tablet should be down to the staff depending on their requirements and comfort.</p> <p>Shane Collins suggested looking at alternative free software packages that provide the same as Microsoft. He also suggested purchasing refurbished laptops from Frome Tech instead of buying new. Sarah noted she would investigate both possibilities with FTC's IT company.</p> <p>The recommendations were for Cllrs to approve the:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Replacement laptops in January 2020 - £6k expenditure 2. Income and expenditure sheet to 30 September 2019 3. Balance sheet, including the breakdown of reserves 4. Payments made over £500 <p>Proposed by Rich Ackroyd, seconded by Ali Barclay, agreed unanimously.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">SW</p> <p style="text-align: center;">SW</p> <p style="text-align: center;">SW</p>
<p>2019/32/CM</p>	<p>6. For ratification - Making FTC website administrator post permanent Cllrs noted the report. The recommendation was to ratify the decision by the Town Clerk to make the website administrator post permanent.</p>	

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	Proposed by Rich Ackroyd, seconded by Maxine Crawley, agreed unanimously.	
2019/33/CM	7. For information - Staff update to Council Matters November 2019 Cllrs noted the report.	
2019/34/CM	8. For decision - Approving the Staff Handbook Cllrs noted the report. The recommendation was for Cllrs to approve Chapter 4 of the Constitution – the Staff Handbook – with no changes. Proposed by Nick Dove, Mark Dorrington, agreed unanimously.	
2019/35/CM	9. For decision - An update on the Town Hall boiler Chris Stringer explained that the most cost effective and efficient option for the Town Hall, as an historical building, was a gas boiler. Sean Powell, Town Hall Steward, gave an overview of the other different boiler options that had been explored. The reasons the other options were discounted were because: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CHP - An inefficient and high cost option. Multiple changes to the building likely required • Biomass - Impractical given the indoor space (not enough room for the larger boiler) and the outdoor space (not enough room for dedicated storage for fuel) • Air-source heat pumps - Expected higher installation cost; higher running costs of electricity (unless we factor in Renewable Heat Incentive RHI); impact on building externally; potential impact on building internally; better in more air-tight buildings • Ground-source heat pump - Lack of outdoor space; (expected) very high installation cost <p>A new gas boiler now gives FTC the opportunity to plan for 10 years' time; and is likely to be the cheapest system now (both in outlay and running costs).</p> <p>Rob Collett suggested how could FTC aim to have zero carbon emissions if using gas for the boiler. Rich Ackroyd noted the gas boiler would use a fraction of the energy that the old boiler would have. He said if the technology advanced in the near future the boiler could be reviewed again.</p> <p>The recommendations were:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Agree to purchase a new gas boiler following a final review of the quotes submitted 	

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	<p>(Noting the anticipated cost range based on three quotes already received)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Delegate responsibility to the Environment Manager and the Business Manager to oversee the final review of the quotes submitted 3. Delegate responsibility to the Environment Manager to oversee the purchase of the new boiler <p>Proposed by Steve Tanner, seconded by Rich Ackroyd, agreed by majority.</p>	<p>CS/SW</p> <p>CS</p>
2019/36/CM	10. For information - Health & Safety update Cllrs noted the report.	
2019/37/CM	The next meeting will be at 7pm on Wednesday 26 February 2020 at Frome Town Hall	

The Chair closed the meeting at 8.10pm