

FROME TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the Town Matters Committee

Wednesday 12 February 2020 at 7pm
Frome Town Hall, Christchurch Street West, Frome BA11 1EB

Present:

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

In attendance:

Luke Cleary (Acorn Property), Edward Nash (Nash Partnership), Cllr John Clarke, Cllr Shane Collins, Ric Swann (Civic Society) Peter Wheelhouse (Deputy Town Clerk), Chris Stringer (Environment Manager), Viv Whittaker (Community Projects Officer), Kate Hellard (Community Development Manager), Beccy Byrne (Marketing and Communications Officer), Laura Flaherty (Executive Assistant to the Town Clerk and Mayor)

Approx. 30 members of the public

Minute Ref	Agenda Item	Action
2020/1/TM	<p>The meeting started at 7pm</p> <p>1a. Apologies for absence Received from Ali Barclay, Nick Dove and Andy Palmer</p> <p>1b. Declaration of members' interests Rich Ackroyd declared personal interests in items 4 and 8. Sheila Gore declared a personal interest in item 7a.</p> <p>1c. Minutes from the last meeting on 11 December 2019 The minutes of the Town Matters Committee meeting held on 11 December 2019 were approved as a true record of the meeting and signed by the Chair.</p> <p>Proposed by Mark Dorrington, seconded by Sheila Gore agreed unanimously.</p>	
2020/2/TM	<p>2. Questions and comments from the public and Cllrs John Clarke expressed his concern about drug use within the town. He proposed a meeting between the police and Cllrs, and asked FTC to facilitate. Rich Ackroyd offered to fill John in on the work that was currently being done.</p>	
2020/3/TM	<p>3. For decision – Consultation response to the revised plans for the Saxonvale development Ref 2019/1180 OTS Luke Cleary from Acorn Property, the developer of the site, gave an overview of the revisions to the proposal for the development of Saxonvale. These included:</p>	

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- The proposed parallel parking on Garsdale Avenue had been reallocated to the underground car park. This meant that pedestrians and cyclists would have greater priority.
- The Western Warehouse is to be retained. Therefore, changes had been made to the height of nearby buildings
- Indicative ideas had been presented for a play area in the riverside park – detailed design would come forward at Reserved Matters stage
- A 'Home Zone' area – essentially a 20-mph zone is proposed
- Changes had been made to the Parameter Plan to show new flexible uses on Garsdale Avenue
- Gorehedge is to become a signalized junction with pedestrian phases and measures for cyclists

Edward Nash from Nash Partnership explained that in preparing the scheme, Nash and Acorn had considered how Saxonvale could be developed to reflect the declared climate emergency. They recognised that there were different patterns of living that should be supported. For example, more people are now working from home and need to balance work and childcare commitments. They felt there was a need to restore the balance, therefore the car would not be dominant in this scheme. They proposed to include live/work spaces. These would not only be about lifestyle but also provide an opportunity to be independent and set up a business.

Luke Cleary emphasised that sustainability was a key consideration in the plans. He noted that Acorn were working with FTC on a micro grid and heat network feasibility study. They had planned for 45,000 sq.ft. of commercial space and the potential to reuse the former Western Warehouse. Their aim was to provide 20% affordable housing. The site plan also increased permeability within the development and access to town. He also explained the plans for making the site green and biodiverse such as planting native trees, including a community garden and a play park along the riverside which would link with Rodden Meadow.

Damon Moore, owner of the Silk Mill, asked if there had been a study to predict the additional emissions near to St Johns School. Luke explained an air quality assessment had been made, although the model had not accounted for around the school. He noted the future would be all about electric cars. They would be installing 17 fast charging points and hosting a car and bike club.

Damon Moore noted his objections to the plans for the site. He felt the application was premature. Also, Acorn were still adding supporting documents to MDC's planning portal and only allowing

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	<p>three weeks for a consultation. Luke clarified that no information submitted was new.</p> <p>Rich Ackroyd asked if the consultation period could be extended? Peter said he would ask the MDC Officer if it was possible.</p> <p>Ric Swann, Civic Society, raised his concerns with the revised plans and identified what he called fundamental issues. He felt the proposed 45,000 sq. ft. would not enable the Local Plan's requirement of 900 jobs. He felt that there would be over development due to density of the development proposed. In addition, he felt the plan for Gorehedge did not deal with pedestrians crossing at the top of Bath Street.</p> <p>Edward explained the employment site equated to four times the size of the Weston Warehouse. In addition, 15,000 sq. ft. was proposed for live/work and 16, 000 sq. ft. of multi-use class. The proposed floor space would generate a high density of employment. Edward said he disagreed about the numbers for employment in the Local Plan as it was a legacy of the previous proposal for a supermarket on the site.</p> <p>John Clarke felt the development should give priority to commercial space and was not sensitive to the needs of Frome. He felt there should only be about 200 houses and the visual heritage should be protected.</p> <p>Concern was raised about the lack of affordable housing and that the proposed 20% was not enough. Luke argued that the site provided more affordable housing than was required of them. The site would become unviable if they increased this number.</p> <p>Martin Dimery expressed concern about the volume of traffic and asked if traffic calming measures had been considered for Vicarage Street. Luke explained that HGV's would no longer use Vicarage Street. Martin also asked if an archaeological survey had been done. Edward explained a desk study had been done. An archaeologist makes a judgement as to whether further investigation is needed based on finds in the area. Documentation for this had been submitted.</p> <p>Paul Horton said he welcomed many of the changes, particularly to Garsdale Avenue, increased landscaping, introduction of a speed limit, bartons, more trees and reviews by a Design Review Panel. However, he voiced his disappointment with regard to affordable housing and had expected to see a minimum of 30%. He was also concerned about the amount of commercial and non-residential floor</p>	PWh
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	<p>space. He said there was a need for more understanding of the improvements to Gorehedge.</p> <p>The recommendation was to agree the response in the report as the Town Council's formal response to the revised plans and documents.</p> <p>Proposed by Mark Dorrington, seconded by Rich Ackroyd, agreed unanimously.</p> <p>Paul Horton proposed an additional recommendation to seek extra time for the consultation and hard copies of the plans to be available at the Town Hall, seconded by John Nelson, agreed unanimously.</p>	<p>JL</p> <p>PWh</p>
2020/4/TM	<p>4. For decision - Next steps towards a bridge between Edmund Park and Adderwell</p> <p>Chris Stringer provided an overview of the report. He noted that there was a S106 agreement in place to fund the bridge and it had the potential to be an important form of traffic free access in the town. MDC welcomed FTC leading on the project. The bridge had to be built within ten years. However, Chris mentioned they would like to get on with the build as soon as possible as negotiations with landowners and Network Rail were still required.</p> <p>Shane Collins asked if the bridge could be used by cyclists? Chris explained that it was unlikely to fit the requirements of Sustrans such as width however it is likely to be used by cyclists anyway. Paul Horton queried why it could not be big enough for cycling? Chris said the option could be explored however there could be higher costs. He reiterated that pedestrians would remain the priority.</p> <p>The recommendations were:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Delegate responsibility to the Environment Manager and the Planning & Development Manager to work with FORF to progress the project to the next key stage; and to report back to the relevant Council committee at a suitable time 2. Recognise FORF's contributions to the project already made <p>Proposed by Rich Ackroyd, seconded by Rob Collett, agreed by majority.</p>	<p>CS/JL</p>
2020/5/TM	<p>5. For decision – Findings and actions from Vocational Training Steering Group</p> <p>Maxine Crawley provided a summary of the report. Viv Whitaker noted there would be an event held in collaboration with the steering group and training providers on 25 March aimed at young people to enable easier access to information about further education. In</p>	

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	<p>addition, they would be conducting a survey to find out training needs and requirements.</p> <p>Maxine also noted they would be working with Frome College to offer life coaches, creating a training page on the FTC website, promoting their statement of intent, looking into business training needs and to continue the co ordination role.</p> <p>Rich Ackroyd thanked Viv and Maxine for their work.</p> <p>The recommendation was to approve the vocational training statement of intent and endorse the next steps identified.</p> <p>Proposed by Rich Ackroyd, seconded by John Nelson, agreed unanimously.</p>	
2020/6/TM	<p>6. For decision – Consultation response to the Proposed Main Modifications (MM) to the Mendip Local Plan Part 2.</p> <p>Peter Wheelhouse summarised the report. He said the intention was to make sure the parish sector was involved in the process.</p> <p>Two of the main concerns about the proposed modifications were the removal of the green space allocation for some areas and the loss of some of the employment land. However, the addition of a footbridge in the Saxonvale site was a welcome addition as was the requirement for masterplans for four significant sites for proposed developments.</p> <p>Rob Collett queried why some developments were marked outside of the boundary line on the mapped area. Peter explained there would be some proposals outside of the boundary as some fell outside of the parish. He noted that they raised a concern about piecemeal developments without strategic planning.</p> <p>Sheila Gore said that the messages from government were confusing around planning and the changes they kept introducing. However, she felt it was important to keep talking to Frome's parish neighbours.</p> <p>The recommendation was to agree the proposed response to the Proposed Main Modifications (MM) to the Mendip Local Plan Part 2.</p> <p>Proposed by Anne Hills, seconded by Steve Tanner, agreed unanimously.</p>	JL
2020/7/TM	<p>7 a. For decision - Community Grants £300 - £2,000</p> <p>Scott Ward presented the recommendations of the Grants Advisory Panel. He explained that the total asked for in this round was circa £24k. However, the remaining budget was £6,400. Therefore, the</p>	

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	<p>Panel, which met on 4 February, were unable to fulfil all requests from the fifteen applicants. They expressed a willingness to receive applications from organisations that had been unsuccessful in future grant rounds.</p> <p>Martin Dimery expressed his disappointment on behalf of Frome Festival who were unsuccessful in this round. He noted the Festival's confusion around the Panel's request that they instead work with Frome Museum to bring their project forward. Martin did acknowledge the Panel had to make difficult decisions with regard to the demand. Rich Ackroyd extended the offer to reapply in the next grant round expected to open in April.</p> <p>The recommendations were:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Agree the proposals in table 1 made by the Grants Advisory Panel. 2. Delegate authority to the Community Development Manager to ensure the recommended conditions are met and review the impacts of this funding as appropriate. <p>Proposed by Mark Dorrington, seconded by Rob Collett, agreed by majority.</p>	KH
2020/8/TM	<p>7 b. For decision – Substantial Project Fund up to £8,000</p> <p>Rich Ackroyd summarised the process undertaken by the Grants Advisory Panel.</p> <p>Martin Dimery asked for clarification on the budget amounts. It was previously agreed at Council that the new Substantial Project Fund would have a budget of £50k (2020/21). Kate Hellard explained that the Sea Change Fund would have a budget of £40k and would be for organisations requiring some core funding. In addition, the fund came with support to ensure the benefitting organisations were equipped to make a step change to a sustainable future. This fund was expected to open in the new financial year.</p> <p>Martin Dimery explained that Frome Festival had had no funding from the Arts Council in the last 15 years and funding from SCC and MDC had also ceased. The Festival felt the previous Multi Year Agreement had given them the opportunity to apply for additional funding from other sources.</p> <p>There was then a discussion about how FTC could support the Festival going forward with an agreed action for Kate Hellard to meet with Beverly and Martin to discuss.</p> <p>The recommendations were:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Agree the proposals in table 1 made by the Grants Advisory Panel. 2. Delegate authority to the Community Development Manager to 	KH

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	ensure the recommended conditions are met and review the impacts of this funding as appropriate. Proposed by Rich Ackroyd, seconded by Anita Collier, agreed unanimously.	KH
2020/9/TM	8. For information – Update on Planning consultations and responses Steve Tanner provided a summary of the report which was noted by Cllrs.	
2020/10/TM	The next meeting will be at 7pm on Wednesday 22 April 2020 at Frome Town Hall	

The Chair closed the meeting at 9.20pm