

# FROME TOWN COUNCIL

## Minutes of a meeting of the Council Matters Committee

Wednesday 23 September 2020 at 7pm  
Zoom

### Present:

Councillors: Richard Ackroyd, Lizzie Boyle, Rob Collett, Anita Collier, Maxine Crawley, Mark Dorrington, Nick Dove, Sheila Gore, Anne Hills, John Nelson, Andy Palmer, Steve Tanner

### In attendance:

Cllr Paul Horton (FTC Cllr), Cllr John Clarke (MDC/SCC Cllr), Cllr Drew Gardner (MDC Cllr), Cllr Martin Dimery (SCC Cllr), Paul Wynne (Town Clerk), Rachel Griffin (Marketing and Communications Manager), Sarah Williams (Business Manager), Hannah Paniccia (Finance Assistant), Chris Stringer (Environment Manager), Beccy Byrne (Marketing and Communications Officer), Laura Flaherty (Executive Assistant to the Town Clerk and Mayor)

2 Members of the public

Minute Ref	Agenda Item	Action
2020/61/CM	<p>The meeting started at 7pm</p> <p>In Sara Bulter's absence, deputy chair John Nelson took the chair.</p> <p>1a. Apologies for absence Received from Sara Butler, Maxine Crawley and Andy Wrintmore</p> <p>1b. Declaration of members' interests None was received</p> <p>1c. Minutes from the last meeting on 15 July 2020 The minutes of the Council Matters Committee meeting held on 15 July 2020 were approved as a true record of the meeting and signed by the Chair.</p> <p>Proposed by Rich Ackroyd, seconded by Anne Hills and agreed by majority.</p>	
2020/62/CM	<p>2. Questions and comments from the public and Cllrs Nick Dove asked if FTC would be compensated for the Rangers time when setting up the COVID 19 test site at the Cricket Club? Chris Stringer explained there were lots of organisations helping to set the site up and many would be absorbing costs. He said there was a potential to claim back costs from central government.</p> <p>Drew Gardner asked if FTC would consult over maintaining the road closure in the Market Place. Peter Wheelhouse noted FTC would be providing a press release the next day announcing the reopening of the road on 2 October 2020. Sheila Gore suggested exploring a half</p>	

# FROME TOWN COUNCIL

	<p>road closure. She recommended looking at the Chippenham model. However, she did note that those residents living on Portway and Wallbridge were desperate for the road through the town centre to reopen. She felt a town wide traffic assessment was needed and to look at in a holistic way not just piecemeal.</p> <p>Drew Gardner also raised his concern about recent anti-social behaviour in the town. He noted that the traders on Cheap Street were particularly unhappy and felt it was affecting their business. Peter Wheelhouse confirmed that Kate Hellard would be attending a multi-agency meeting in the near future which would be a good forum to discuss what could be done.</p> <p>John Clarke invited Cllrs to attend the Broadway Allotments and Community meeting the next day to discuss the campaign to save the land from development. He said MDC was exploring the site for affordable housing.</p> <p>The Recycle More scheme would be implemented by Somerset Waste Partnership at the end of October 2020.</p>	
2020/63/CM	<p>3. For approval - Financial update to 31 August 2020 Hannah Paniccia provided a summary of the report.</p> <p>The recommendations were to approve the:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Income and expenditure sheet to 31 August 2020</li> <li>2. Balance sheet, including the breakdown of reserves at 31 August 2020</li> <li>3. Payments made over £500 between 1 July 2020 to 31 August 2020</li> <li>4. RFO Protocol document</li> </ol> <p>Proposed by Andy Palmer, seconded by Anne Hills, agreed by majority.</p>	
2020/64/CM	<p>4. For Information – Improving the public toilets in Victoria Park Chris Stringer summarised the report.</p> <p>He explained the project had been delayed by the lockdown. Chris was in discussion with three companies who specialised in the provision of public toilets to provide a quote. He was also exploring bringing the cleaning at weekends and bank holidays in house with additional support being employed.</p> <p>Sheila Gore clarified that the budget was from the sale of Chantry House, part of the Victoria Hospital site. Chris also confirmed that more had been added to the budget due to cost savings from changing the maintenance of the toilets over the years.</p>	

# FROME TOWN COUNCIL

2020/65/CM	<p>5. For information - Marketing and Communication update</p> <p>Rachel Griffin gave a summary of the report.</p> <p>She highlighted the following work for the comms team:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continued emergency response</li> <li>• School Streets, Market Place Phase 2, Covid testing centre</li> <li>• Making the FTC website accessible</li> <li>• Returning Discover Frome to normal – focussing on Fiver Fest</li> <li>• Nature ideas have been really popular – continue throughout winter</li> <li>• Bringing back noticeboard ambassadors – being supported by Openstorytellers</li> <li>• Events – Halloween Window Wanderland</li> <li>• Liaising with arts and venues to help support them</li> <li>• Thoughts turning to new Covid response, support local messaging, helping with test centre</li> </ul> <p>Rich Ackroyd said Rachel and her team did an excellent job. Rich used the website to get accurate and up to date information when answering queries. He urged other Cllrs to do the same.</p> <p>Anne Hills acknowledged the difficulty of planning events with the new restrictions and asked Rachel how the team were doing this? Rachel explained they were working closely with Chris Stringer who provided risk assessments. Also, with MDC and the police who comprise the Safety Advisory Group.</p> <p>Rob Collett asked what the Frome app was? Rachel explained there was a wealth of information on the Discover Frome website. The app would allow this information to be accessed more easily. It would provide the opportunity to have interactive features for things like walks, notable places and retail offers.</p> <p>Andy Palmer offered his congratulations to Rachel and her team, he found lots of parish councils using Discover Frome as a framework for their own websites. Rachel noted she was often approached and asked to share FTC's model which she was more than happy to do.</p>	
2020/66/CM	<p>6. For decision - Management &amp; Improvement plans for Welshmill and North Parade</p> <p>Chris Stringer explained that since the last review of North Parade, Rangers were working with residents and listening to their ideas for the space. The priority for the area was a tree survey.</p> <p>Chris explained Welshmill was Frome's most valuable play space. A complete play strategy was being explored and thoughts about</p>	

# FROME TOWN COUNCIL

	<p>developments and what we wanted from those could inform what happens at Welshmill in the future.</p> <p>Chris had incorporated new Covid guidelines into the risk assessments for the areas. Open spaces had been identified as important assets to health and wellbeing, so it was important to keep them open and maintained.</p> <p>Steve Tanner asked if the bat friendly lights could be extended? Chris said they had been well received. The stretch of path was looked after by MDC and if more were installed he felt MDC should contribute. There had been requests for them around the town, often not on FTC land, but Chris said that conversations were ongoing.</p> <p>Anne Hills noted that Chris and the Rangers were working with some residents to instil a sense of ownership of open spaces and asked if they would do this for all spaces? Chris said it could happen to a degree, however, there was a balance to maintain as each space had different uses and feels. He said he would welcome conversations with residents.</p> <p>Katie Jones asked what was happening with the play space at Stonebridge? Chris explained this was currently looked after by MDC. It was hoped to include it in the upcoming play strategy. The aim would be to find out what the community wanted to see to understand what should happen in the space in the future whether that was play or something else.</p> <p>John Clarke asked about MDC's plans for leaving spaces wilder and FTC's involvement? Chris said he was in positive discussions with Mendip. Some open spaces on Stonebridge had been identified that could be managed differently. The views of residents would be crucial to taking this forward. He noted MDC were leading on this, but FTC would be happy to assist.</p> <p>The recommendations were:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Adopt the updated management plans for Welshmill and North Parade</li> <li>2. Adopt the new site risk assessments for Welshmill and North Parade</li> <li>3. Approve the scheduled review dates for the plans</li> <li>4. Approve the scheduled annual review of the site risk assessments</li> <li>5. Delegate responsibility to the Environment Manager to deliver the plans</li> <li>6. Delegate responsibility to the Environment Manager to keep the site risk assessments up to date in-between approval and</li> </ol>	CS
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# FROME TOWN COUNCIL

	<p>the (scheduled) annual reviews, including updating the coronavirus risk assessment for both spaces</p> <p>Proposed by Rob Collett, seconded by Anita Collier, agreed by majority.</p>	
2020/67/CM	<p>7. For information - Update on the Frome Town Hall</p> <p>Rachel Griffin explained that there had been a tentative return to the Town Hall by some tenants with a skeleton staff from FTC to keep things ticking over. Cleaning was very important, along with a track and trace system for visitors to the Town Hall. Weddings were beginning to take off with firm bookings in place up to March 2021.</p>	
2020/68/CM	<p>8. For approval – Updates to the Staff Handbook and Contract</p> <p>Sarah Williams gave an overview of the report which was noted by Cllrs.</p> <p>The recommendations were:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Approve the revisions to the Staff Contract</li> <li>2. Approve the revisions to the Staff Handbook</li> </ol> <p>Proposed by Rich Ackroyd, seconded by Mark Dorrington, agreed unanimously</p>	
2020/69/CM	<p>9. For information – Update on staff changes</p> <p>Cllrs noted the report.</p>	
2020/70/CM	<p>10. For information - Health &amp; Safety update</p> <p>Chris Stringer gave an overview of the report. He highlighted that given the recent government announcement and the need to continue working from home, the proposal to return to the Town Hall for staff was delayed until January 2021.</p>	
2020/71/CM	<p>The next meeting will be at 7pm on Wednesday 4 November 2020 on Zoom</p>	

The Chair closed the meeting at 8.31pm