

Minutes of a meeting of Frome Town Council

Wednesday 17 March 2021, 7pm
Zoom

Present:

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

In attendance:

Radek Evans, Dawn Cunningham, Rachel Clark, Cllr Linda Oliver (SCC), Cllr Martin Dimery (SCC), Cllr Adam Boyden (MDC), Cllr Janine Nash (MDC), Chris Bennett (Selwood Parish Council), Jim Dowling (Selwood Parish Council), PC Simon Humphrey, Paul Wynne (Town Clerk), Peter Wheelhouse (Economic Development and Regeneration Manager & Deputy Town Clerk), Sarah Williams (Business Manager), Jane Llewellyn (Planning and Development 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)

8 members of the public

Minute Ref	Agenda Item	Action
2021/01/FC	<p>The meeting started at 7.00pm</p> <p>1. Mark Dorrington, Mayor of Frome 2019/20, presentation of Civic Awards</p> <p>Mark explained that the awards were outstanding from 2020 as the Annual Town Meeting was unable to go ahead because of the pandemic. He said those he had chosen exemplified volunteering. Radek Evans for his involvement in so many organisations, Rachel Clark for her consistent fundraising for WHY, Dawn Cunningham in recognition of being a founder member of the Frome Citizens Advice Bureau and marking her retirement and Gill Fone for her 40 years with Frome Talking Newspaper.</p>	
2021/02/FC	<p>2a. Apologies for absence</p> <p>Received from Anita Collier and Scott Ward</p> <p>2b. Declaration of members' interests</p> <p>Rich Ackroyd, Ali Barclay, Anne Hills and Steve Tanner declared non-pecuniary interests in item 4.</p> <p>2c. Minutes from the last meeting on 20 January 2021 and the extraordinary meeting on 28 October 2020</p>	

	<p>The minutes of the Frome Town Council meeting held on 20 January 2021 were approved as a true record of the meeting and signed by the Chair.</p> <p>Proposed by Sara Butler, seconded by Nick Dove, agreed unanimously.</p> <p>The minutes of the Extraordinary Frome Town Council meeting held on 28 October 2020 were approved as a true record of the meeting and signed by the Chair.</p> <p>Proposed by Rich Ackroyd, seconded by Steve Tanner, agreed unanimously.</p>	
2021/03/FC	<p>3. Questions and comments from the public and Cllrs Rich Ackroyd thanked FTC on behalf of the C&G for their recent investment to enable the installation of a ventilation system.</p> <p>Nick Dove noted that the town was looking fantastic and lots of places were looking special thanks to the Rangers.</p>	
2021/04/FC	<p>4. For decision - Community grants Kate Hellard summarized the report and presented the decisions of the Grants Advisory Panel.</p> <p>The recommendations were:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Agree the recommendations for grants in table 1. 2. Delegate authority to the Community Development Manager to ensure the recommended conditions are met and review the impacts of this funding as appropriate. 3. Agree to the creation of an EMR to enable a new grants round to be open on the 18 March with a closing date at the end of April. <p>Proposed by Mark Dorrington, seconded by Rich Ackroyd, agreed unanimously.</p> <p>4. Ratify the Mayor's Grant awards detailed above</p> <p>Proposed by John Nelson, seconded by Andy Palmer, agreed unanimously.</p> <p>Kate Hellard clarified the newly proposed changes to the community grant application and decision-making process. Rob Collett asked how members of the public would be chosen to help deciding on awards. Kate said this was yet to be discussed in detail. She explained a lot of thought will go into it as it</p>	<p>KH</p> <p>SW</p>

	<p>shouldn't be a popularity contest; instead, it should reflect the interests of a broad demographic.</p> <p>Lizzie Boyle asked what the implications for phased funding would be and was their support for recipients around sustainability and resilience? Kate explained the budget was split between the rounds, but it was important to be responsive also. She also noted FTC offered a training programme, bespoke advice and supported people/organisations to connect if they are doing similar projects.</p> <p>Andy Palmer noted it was a harder process if the panel was not decision making and explained he was in favour of making it a committee. Kate said there was an opportunity over the next six months to move in that direction, the hybrid solution was a steppingstone.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Delegate to the Town Clerk, in very close consultation with the Grants Advisory Panel, to award community grants. To be followed by ratification of his decision at the next Town Matters Committee meeting, and to update the financial regulations and standing orders as appropriate. 6. Delegate authority to the Community Development Manager to work with the Grants Advisory Panel to develop a working model for the group based on the points laid out in this report and to trial the proposed way of working over the coming six months. 7. To review this way of managing the community grants decision at the Town Matters meeting in October, when an option may be to create a formal committee. <p>Proposed by Anne Hills, seconded by Nick Dove, agreed unanimously.</p> <p>Mark Dorrington thanked Kate and the panel for all their work done over the past year.</p>	<p>PWY</p> <p>KH</p> <p>KH</p>
2021/05/FC	<p>5. For decision – Market Place Phase 2 project</p> <p>Peter Wheelhouse gave a summary of the report and presented images demonstrating the improvements made to the Market Place.</p> <p>Paul Horton expressed his disappointment that, in his opinion, Cllrs were not kept informed and should have been told about the additional costs sooner. He also felt that the outcome of the project is that it had not achieved the objective of making the Market Place more pedestrian friendly – he felt that the opposite had been achieved.</p>	

	<p>Drew Gardner expressed sympathy for FTC who had worked really hard to bring the project to fruition. He agreed with Paul Horton about the unintended consequence of the traffic moving easier and now making it harder for pedestrians to cross the road. He encouraged FTC to take a second look.</p> <p>Paul Wynne expressed disappointment with the negative response by some Cllrs. He explained the only thing that did not happen was the installation of the courtesy crossings, which was not a fault of FTC's. He said there were no choices about the road closures and a pandemic could not be planned for. Staff had delivered what was asked for and it was not fair to change the goal posts after the scheme was delivered. Paul Wynne said FTC would continue to try to persuade highways to resurface the road.</p> <p>In response to a question from Sheila Gore, Peter Wheelhouse explained that the likelihood of overspend on outstanding items that still had to be completed was low. An agreement had been made with the contractors. With regard to the projected overspend, the goalposts kept moving throughout the project and negotiations with the contractor around the final bill had only been completed recently. Peter said that in an ideal world, he would have come to Cllrs with more information about the likely overspend earlier but there wasn't certainty about the figures until late on. Ultimately the final bill had been reduced by £15k through negotiation.</p> <p>Martin Dimery said he was happy to hear complaints about highways and pass them on.</p> <p>Cllrs discussed some of their further frustrations with the project as well as the positive elements.</p> <p>The recommendation was to agree to the £36,250 overspend to be funded utilising the Saxonvale Legacy EMR</p> <p>Proposed by Nick Dove, seconded by Rich Ackroyd, agreed by majority.</p>	
2021/06/FC	<p>6. Response to the Government's consultation on the proposals to establish a unitary council in Somerset</p> <p>Paul Wynne gave a summary of the report.</p> <p>He explained he was not proposing to decide on supporting either proposal. What was important was how the councils interact with the parish councils. He explained Cllrs had had an</p>	

	<p>informal discussion with a unitary expert, informally they had decided to recruit someone to help advise on a way forward.</p> <p>Maxine Crawley acknowledged the hours put in by Paul to help Cllrs understand the proposals. She noted it was up to Cllrs to be on the front foot and a consultant was important for this. FTC wanted its voice heard and to be able to take the frustration out of what happens locally.</p> <p>The recommendations were:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Approve the response to the Government Consultation over the proposals for a unitary council(s) in Somerset at Appendix 2 2. Ratify the decision made by the Town Clerk following informal discussion with Cllrs to recruit an advisor to advise Frome Town Council in the run up to and establishment of unitary council(s) in Somerset. The brief is at Appendix 3. The new project budget line is to be used to fund this work. 3. Delegate to the Town Clerk, in consultation with Cllr Crawley, the recruitment of the advisor and to manage the contract in the coming months. 4. Note that Cllrs are researching the views of Cllrs elsewhere in the country who have experience of working with unitary councils. 5. Provide updates to future Council meetings. <p>Proposed by Nick Dove, seconded by Steve Tanner, agreed unanimously.</p>	<p>PWY</p> <p>PWY</p>
2021/07/FC	<p>7. For information – Update on transfer of Boyle Cross Peter Wheelhouse summarised the report.</p> <p>John Nelson asked why the licence had to be annual? Peter explained that it was down to licencing laws. Pubs/clubs also had to do this on an annual basis.</p> <p>Rob Collett asked what good repair meant? Peter explained it was open to interpretation, however the expectation was that FTC would keep what was created in good condition, look after fountain, paving, benches etc.</p>	
2021/08/FC	The next meeting will be at 7pm on Wednesday 19 May 2021, on Zoom	

Table 1 - Agenda items

The Chair closed the meeting at 9.06pm