

FROME TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of Frome Town Council

Wednesday 9 September 2020 at 7pm
Zoom

Present:

Councillors: Richard Ackroyd, Ali Barclay, Sara Butler, Anita Collier (chair), Maxine Crawley, Mark Dorrington, Nick Dove, Sheila Gore, Anne Hills, John Nelson, Andy Palmer, Steve Tanner, Andy Wrintmore

In attendance:

John Clarke (MDC/SCC Cllr), Shane Collins (MDC Cllr), Drew Gardner (MDC Cllr), Paul Wynne (Town Clerk), Sarah Williams (Business Manager), Rachel Griffin (Marketing and Communications Manager), Kate Hellard (Community Development Manager), Jess Francombe (Children and Young People's Project Officer), Hannah Stopford (Children and Young People's Project Officer), Jane Llewellyn (Planning and Development Manager), Helen Viner (Wild about Trees Project Officer), Beccy Byrne (Marketing and Communications Officer), Laura Flaherty (Executive Assistant to the Town Clerk and Mayor)

12 members of the public

Minute Ref	Agenda Item	Action
2020/49/FC	<p>The meeting started at 7pm</p> <p>1a. Apologies for absence Received from Lizzie Boyle, Rob Collett, Paul Horton and Scott Ward. Rich Ackroyd would be joining the meeting later.</p> <p>1b. Declaration of members' interests Ali Barclay and Anita Collier declared personal interests in item 6 and Steve Tanner declared a personal and prejudicial interest in item 6.</p> <p>1c. Minutes from the last meeting on 24 June 2020 The minutes of the Frome Town Council meeting held on 24 June 2020 were approved as a true record of the meeting and signed by the Chair.</p> <p>Proposed by Anne Hills, seconded by Maxine Crawley, agreed unanimously.</p> <p>Ali Barclay, Mark Dorrington, Nick Dove and Sheila Gore noted for the record and declared non pecuniary interests in item 6 as a FRECO shareholder.</p>	
2020/50/FC	<p>1.b Questions and comments from the public and Cllrs Paul Wynne provided a brief update on the Market Place project. There had been a delay because some utilities and services, once revealed, needed to be further below the surface. The surfacing at</p>	

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	<p>the crossing points would have to be the same as for the rest of the road as the safety guidance from the government had changed. The road is planned to reopen on 25 September.</p> <p>A member of the public, Chris Higgins, felt he hadn't seen much progress on the Market Place project and asked if FTC would be taking action with the contractor. Paul explained that FTC were working with the contractors on a daily basis to keep the project on track. They had already been working evening and weekends as well.</p> <p>Drew Gardener asked if a consultation could be conducted to find out if Frome residents would like the road closure in the town centre to be extended in some way. Paul Wynne said he would take some soundings from Frome Town Cllrs to see if it was something to approach the community with.</p> <p>Shane Collins noted that upcoming events were an ebike testing on 13 September, the Frome hoedown on 26/27th September.</p> <p>John Clarke noted that SCC had launched their emergency climate change fund for town and parish councils, with funding up to £75k available. John asked if FTC would make an application. Paul noted that FTC were considering a few different projects including the walking and cycling infrastructure plan.</p> <p>Anita Collier and Lizzie Boyle wished Anna Francis well as she went on a year long sabbatical. Both thanked her for her creativity, putting Frome on the map and bringing people together. She had been a pleasure to work with.</p>	
2020/51/FC	<p>2. Presentation from Active and In Touch Rich Ackroyd joined the meeting at 7.37pm.</p> <p>Dougie Brown, Manager for Active and In Touch, gave a brief presentation about their work over the last six months. He noted that A&IT were grateful for Cllrs and staff for all their support, particularly over the last 6 months.</p> <p>Dougie noted that there were 220 members and 170 volunteers. These numbers massively increased during lockdown. This meant they were three years ahead of their target for member numbers.</p> <p>In the last 12 months A&IT had created a new phone service, doubled numbers of members/volunteers, employed volunteer co ordinators, created a new website, and improved monitoring and evaluating.</p> <p>Their aims for the future were to improve their community funding/donations, engagement with young people and were</p>	

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	<p>exploring this with Edventure Frome and bridge the digital gap with some members.</p> <p>Maxine Crawley, who volunteered for A&IT, commended them for how quickly they had adapted and how well they looked after their volunteers. Dougie noted that within the first two weeks of lockdown, 80 people had volunteered.</p>	
<p>2020/52/FC</p>	<p>3. For decision - Market Place Phase III</p> <p>Jane Llewellyn provided a summary of the report. She explained it was unlikely there would be sufficient budget to fund phase III from the contingency in the budget for phase II. Instead options of sponsorship, external grant funding and council funding would be explored.</p> <p>John Nelson asked what the biggest cost was? Jane explained it was the structures to support the planter and seating, they had to be bespoke because of the gradient of the site.</p> <p>Nick Dove said that enhancing the town centre in such bleak times would encourage residents and visitors to boost local traders' position and the sooner the better. He acknowledged it was important to carry out due diligence and install a quality scheme. Sara Butler, John Nelson and Ali Barclay were keen to deliver the scheme now.</p> <p>Anne Hills said she felt the time was not right to fund this and feared that it would not be a priority for Frome residents.</p> <p>A member of the public, James Ramsey, was unhappy with this level of expenditure at this time; money that could be diverted towards keeping the town cleaner, for example. Nick Dove replied that there was always other things on which to spend money and the sums being talked were a lot, but it was important that the design was of a high quality.</p> <p>A member of the public, Phillipa Clarke, asked if the cost included maintenance? Jane explained that the Town Ranger team would take on the maintenance. Planting schemes had yet to be designed but would come from the town centre floral budget. Ongoing maintenance of the planters and seating was expected to be minimal.</p> <p>A member of the public, Katy Duke asked if the existing planters would be kept and would a hand rail be considered. Jane the planters could be kept, and the design had the potential to be added to. Jane had discussed adding the handrail with MDC however they would not give approval for its installation.</p> <p>The recommendations were:</p>	

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	<p>1. Agree the design that has been prepared</p> <p>Proposed by Nick Dove, seconded by Rich Ackroyd, agreed by majority</p> <p>2. Delegate authority to the Planning & Development Manager to obtain any permissions required from Mendip in its capacity as owner of the site and as the planning authority.</p> <p>Proposed by Rich Ackroyd, seconded by Sheila Gore, agreed unanimously.</p> <p>3. Delegate authority to the Planning & Development Manager to investigate sources of funding for the project and work with the RFO is explore the potential of using existing council funds to make up any shortfall</p> <p>Proposed by Nick Dove, seconded by Sara Butler, agreed by majority</p> <p>4. Bring a report back to the next Council meeting in November</p> <p>Proposed by Sara Butler, seconded by Maxine Crawley, agreed unanimously.</p>	
<p>2020/53/FC</p>	<p>4. For information - Children and Young People’s Project Update Hannah Stopford and Jess Francombe gave an overview of the report. They highlighted some of the projects such as the detached youth work, Make it Happen conference, link and learn, community training and networking.</p> <p>Both Hannah and Jess had adapted their roles to help with FTC’s emergency response to the pandemic, primarily by co ordinating hundreds of volunteers who supported the shop for you project aimed at those who were shielding.</p> <p>Some of the projects that had been planned for the summer had to be cancelled.</p> <p>An upcoming piece of work was the Family Connect project. There was a gap in information about services, and it would be modelled on Health Connections Mendip. The hope was to start with a virtual service then include an online directory on the FTC website. Hannah would be concentrating more on working with neighbourhood networks. Jess was working on developing a play strategy. It would build on existing initiatives, focus on spaces and consider equality and access. Both Hannah and Jess would be considering the impact of COVID 19 with an audit to understand gaps and other areas of potential work.</p>	

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	<p>Anne Hills said she appreciated the inclusion of adults in the play strategy. She felt the Family Connect service would be really useful. Anne felt that the upcoming local government reorganisation would leave gaps that FTC would need to explore whether to fill and Hannah and Jess’ work would help identify what these might be.</p> <p>Andy Wrintmore thanked Hannah and Jess. He said they had done incredible by adapting their roles.</p>	
2020/54/FC	<p>5. For information - An update on our Wild about Trees project Helen Viner gave a summary of the report.</p> <p>She highlighted the proposed plans for planting at Mary Baily and Rodden Meadow. She explained the aim was to engage with residents and community groups in late September/beginning of October to test whether the plans needed to change.</p> <p>During lockdown Helen had sourced 100 oak trees and hoped to donate at least one to every school in Frome so that they would become a part of the towns story.</p> <p>Helen would be working on a project with the Frome dissenter’s cemetery alongside Active and In Touch and Duke of Edinburgh students.</p> <p>Ultimately lockdown had highlighted how important Frome’s green spaces and trees were to the town and its residents.</p> <p>Sheila Gore asked if planting more trees around the MUGA to prevent balls going over fence, could be considered. Paul confirmed that Chris Stringer was in conversation with the Bowls Club about it.</p> <p>Adam Boyden asked what the plans for rewilding and tree planting around Brunel Way were. Kate Hellard noted that that open space belonged to MDC and that Chris Stringer was speaking to Haylee Wilkins at MDC about their plans for rewilding and was waiting for them to come back an outline for their community engagement to make sure it dovetailed with FTC plans.</p>	
2020/55/FC	<p>6. For Decision - Covid-19: 2nd Wave / Local Lockdown planning Kate Hellard summarised the report.</p> <p>Kate explained that more national restrictions that might be brought in would have wider impacts. The number of people claiming universal credit had doubled in Frome. It was likely that there will be redundancies. Kate and colleagues were working with a range of</p>	

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	<p>partners to provide information ahead of time, so people didn't find themselves in crisis. Kate and Paul were strengthening links with SCC and MDC.</p> <p>Anne Hills noted that claims for Universal Credit were going to reduce the tax base. She asked if there were any national predictions. Kate explained she was having regular meetings with colleagues at MDC and hoped that some forecasts would be available soon around numbers likely to be claiming council tax relief.</p> <p>The recommendations were:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Note the report 2. Approve a virement of £2k from EMR 318 Community Development Work to cost centre 804 Emergency Expenses, to assist A&IT in taking over the Shop for Me administration. <p>Proposed by Anne Hills, seconded by John Nelson, agreed unanimously.</p>	
2020/56/FC	<p>7. For Ratification – Virement of the £5k Citizens Assembly EMR Cllrs noted the report.</p> <p>The recommendations were:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To ratify the decision to use £4k of the Citizens Assembly EMR to support the School Streets Feasibility & Consultation Programme. 2. To ratify the decision to use £1k of the Citizens Assembly EMR to support the Field to Fork project. <p>Proposed by Anne Hills, seconded by Rich Ackroyd, agreed by majority.</p>	
2020/57/FC	<p>The next meeting will be at 7pm on Wednesday 18 November 2020, venue to be confirmed</p>	

The Chair closed the meeting at 9.08pm