

Minutes of a meeting of Frome Town Council

Wednesday 16 March 2022, 7pm
Frome Town Hall and Zoom

Present:

In the Town Hall: Rich Ackroyd, Ali Barclay, Sara Butler, Anita Collier, Mark Dorrington, Nick Dove, Sheila Gore, Paul Horton, Andy Palmer, Steve Tanner, Scott Ward, and Andy Wrintmore

On Zoom: Lizzie Boyle, Anne Hills, Paul Horton

In attendance:

Paul Wynne (Town Clerk), Peter Wheelhouse (Deputy Town Clerk), Sarah Williams (Business Manager), Kate Hellard (Community Development Manager), Rachel Griffin (Marketing and Communications Manager), Jane Llewellyn (Planning and Development Manager), Beccy Byrne (Marketing and Communications Officer), Laura Flaherty (Executive Assistant to the Town Clerk and Mayor)

3 members of the public were in attendance at Frome Town Hall

11 members of the public were in attendance on Zoom

Minute Ref	Agenda Item	Action
2022/12/FC	<p>Started at 7pm</p> <p>A minutes silence was held in support for the citizens of Ukraine and for Frome's twin town Rabka in Poland.</p> <p>1a. Apologies for absence John Nelson proposed that Cllrs accepted apologies from Maxine Crawley, and from Lizzie Boyle, Anne Hills and Paul Horton who attended on Zoom.</p> <p>Seconded by Anita Collier, agreed unanimously.</p> <p>1b. Declaration of members' interests None was received.</p> <p>1c. Minutes from the last meeting on 19 January 2022 It was noted that Ali Barclay did attend the meeting and was added to the list of attendees.</p> <p>Paul Wynne confirmed that Jane Llewellyn had re emphasised the importance of yellow lines at Foundry Barton to Somerset Highways but had not received a reply. He said he would provide an update once a reply was received.</p>	PWy / JL

	<p>The minutes of the Frome Town Council meeting held on 19 January 2022 were approved as a true record of the meeting and signed by the Chair.</p> <p>Proposed by Andy Palmer, seconded by Mark Dorrington, agreed unanimously.</p>	
<p>2022/13/FC</p>	<p>2. <u>Questions and comments from the public and Cllrs</u> Gill Fone raised her concern about people parking in Henley Way for the Independent Market. Paul Wynne offered to invite Steve Deacon, Parking Services Manager at SCC, to come along to the next Town Matters meeting on 20 April to answer parking concerns directly where's the blockage.</p> <p>Gill also asked about the repairs to the railings on MDC side of river as they were meant to be completed. She also said the area was overgrown. Paul said he would ask the questions of Chris Stringer and find out the answers.</p>	<p>PWy / JL</p> <p>PWy / CS</p>
<p>2022/14/FC</p>	<p>6. For decision – To adopt the report from FTC’s unitary consultants on a strategy for asset devolution and an update on the Frome Area Local Community Network</p> <p>FTC advisors, Ian Timms and Martin Woods, presented from their report, Devolution of Assets Phase 1. The report was at Appendix 1. The recording of their presentation can be viewed on the FTC YouTube channel.</p> <p>Max Wide noted the report was a brilliant mapping of the landscape to get involved in. He did note there was a lot of allusion to Cornwall etc, but Somerset was very different. He felt what was suggested in the report would be several months of work that would need resourcing and suggested a working group. He said where FTC had been most successful was in community development work, Max said this should be as much of a focus as asset transfer. He was concerned that if FTC took on all the assets in the report it would be a very different organisation and Somerset would not want to grow another district council.</p> <p>Rich Ackroyd said the LCN’s should have teeth and be able to make decisions. He wanted to see some actual numbers, how much money do car parks make, running costs of key centre etc. and to urge them to give the information freely.</p> <p>There was a discussion about assets and liabilities such as car parks and open spaces. Also about negotiations around these.</p>	

	<p>Andy Palmer asked if there were any grounds to look at certain service delivery as part of devolution of assets. For example, to have a say in licencing or low level decision making in planning. Ian Timms said it should be considered holistically and something to think about as a whole piece. The work was ongoing with the unitary transition team and there had already been a bit of clarity on planning: as they are regulatory functions there was a requirement for them to be maintained by Somerset.</p> <p>Paul Wynne also noted that the unitary team’s thought was that if LCN’s were involved with planning and highways, these subjects would dominate all meetings and other opportunities for LCN working would be relegated. However, it would be good to explore how to bring them closer and planner and highways engineer attendance at LCN meetings might bring be helpful occasionally.</p> <p>Lizzie Boyle suggested taking things on but in a measured way over time. As part of a deal, FTC should ask for financial help from the unitary for them to help with due diligence.</p> <p>The recommendation was to adopt the report at Appendix 1.</p> <p>Proposed by Rich Ackroyd, seconded by John Nelson, agreed unanimously.</p> <p>Kate Hellard gave an update on the Frome Area Local Community Network. She explained Frome was one of four pilots and the given topic of focus was children, young people, and families. They were focused on a way of working and building relationships with parishes, the approach was to go slow to go fast. A methodology had been created that could be deployed to any given topic. Kate explained it was important was not to lose the opportunity for place based action. She was confident the model will work around other topics and evaluation would be important. Kate and other members of the LCN had formed a working group to develop terms of reference.</p> <p>Max Wide asked who made up the LCN. Kate explained it started with parishes, meetings are now shared widely also with other agencies such as Spark, the police, SCC, etc. Depending on the discussion item for the meeting relevant stakeholders will be invited to attend.</p> <p>Nick Dove noted that the impact of problems would likely inform the work of the LCN’s. Kate said it was important they were strategic meetings, FTC nor the parishes had statutory</p>	
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	<p>responsibilities, but partners/colleagues do. The unitary team saw these as a strategic partnership but not a service delivery mechanism. The idea was to achieve some robust place based services to address some of these problems.</p> <p>Mel Usher asked how the LCN's would be supported. Kate noted the unitary team were looking at how the 20 LCN's would be supported, such as a senior member of unitary team and administration. Kate explained FTC and the parishes did not want lose independence in the process and were talking about how that would happen.</p> <p>Scott Ward asked where the data set came from? Kate explained it was SCC that had lots of data on, for example, education and public health. The SCC intelligence bureau were poised to Frome Area based data and the conversation had started about what was required. She noted there was a need to balance it with qualitative data which would be gathered with the neighbouring parishes.</p>	
<p>2022/15/FC</p>	<p>4. For decision – Whether to acquire the leasehold of the Loop de Loop building in the Cattle Market car park Peter Wheelhouse summarised the report.</p> <p>Mark Dorrington asked why the freehold hadn't been asked for? Paul Wynne noted the common response from Mendip asset managers was not to transfer the freehold of anything.</p> <p>Sara Butler said rats are known to be underneath and at the back of the building. There was concern they would eat through the electrics, also the maintenance costs could be significant. Peter explained a structural engineer was looking at the rear of building and would report on how serious the problem was.</p> <p>Scott Ward asked what would happen if FTC didn't take on the lease as it lapsed in 2018. Peter explained FTC had been encouraged to take it on by the community so the current activities in the building could continue. He said it was a reasonable step for FTC to take and was a short step to ownership in the future.</p> <p>There was a further discussion about leasehold and freehold. It was agreed for Peter and Paul to go back to MDC to explore a freehold transfer or a lease until March 2023 with the option to renegotiate with the new unitary Council.</p> <p>The recommendation was to agree a 5-year lease of Loop de Loop on a peppercorn rent and take responsibility for</p>	

	<p>maintenance to enable the Community Fridge and Larder to continue to operate.</p> <p>Proposed by Sara Butler, seconded by Nick Dove, agreed unanimously.</p>	
<p>2022/16/FC</p>	<p>3. A verbal detailed summary of the Community Development teams projects for the year ahead 2022/23 Kate Hellard gave a short presentation.</p> <p>Kate and her team had developed a model way of working which was person centred, recognised the role of the community, neighbourhoods, schools, nurseries, local activities, statutory/crisis services. Ultimately the aim was to avoid people reaching crisis level and having need to these over stretched services.</p> <p>They had based their work at street level. There were now 98 street networks. Ironically, coronavirus has helped as people recognised the importance of making those connections. It had been recognised there were assets in the communities such as parks and open spaces but also people assets.</p> <p>The real issues were missing education, being cold and hungry, mental health, being lonely and isolated, no transport choices, experience of domestic abuse and neglect, lack of aspiration and activity and anti-social behaviour and exploitation. Kate noted there were new demographics of families experiencing difficulties. Kate and her team were working with partners at all levels and starting to consider what can be done to help.</p> <p>Kate explained with the LCN there were ranges of opportunities and these didn't always require significant funding. The LCN was working on more strategic projects and mapping the wider geographic area, identifying gaps, focusing on universal services, strategic engagement and recognising the role of the third sector.</p> <p>SCC had a series of projects they want to work with FTC on such as Help to help yourself (H2HY).</p> <p>Further work was:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A play strategy for adults and children had been developed • Piloted street closures, with SCC adopting a simple procedure to allow this to happen • FIND – this needed to move to the next step and train the community and provide a telephone/face to face service to get help before reaching crisis. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wild bunch – improving ecology of the town in small ways, bat/bird boxes, having a shared charging point • Street parties were fundamental in bringing people together so they can tackle much bigger/broader things together. Mean we have resilient strong communities. 	
2022/17/FC	<p>6. A verbal update on the outcome of the town vote on the event to celebrate the Queen’s Platinum Jubilee Rachel Griffin gave a short presentation.</p> <p>She explained a working party had worked on plans for marking the Jubilee however there was no real consensus about what to do. They decided to put the question to Frome residents instead.</p> <p>In January they canvassed for ideas and added interested members to working group. In February they held a panel where the suggested projects were scrutinised. There was a total of 17 projects. These projects had to meet a set of criteria. Some could not be put forward either because FTC did not own the land, or the budget was too high. This left three projects. 873 voted for the projects and the winning event was a blossom circle at the Showfield with 379 votes. They were aiming to move the project forward as quickly as possible.</p>	
2022/18/FC	<p>7. For decision – Re-approval of chapters in the constitution:</p> <p>13. Access to information policy 14. Information policy 15. Publication Scheme 16. Information retention and disposal policy 17. Data Protection Policy 18. General Data Protection Regulation Privacy Information</p> <p>Sarah Williams summarised the report which was noted by Cllrs.</p> <p>The recommendation was to approve and adopt the chapters listed in the report.</p> <p>Proposed by Ali Barclay, seconded by Andy Palmer, agreed unanimously.</p>	
2022/19/FC	<p>The next item on a possible acquisition was held in confidential session, therefore members of the public and press were asked to leave.</p>	

	Andy Wrintmore proposed to enter into confidential session which was seconded by Rich Ackroyd and agreed unanimously.	
2022/20/FC	8. For decision – A possible acquisition Cllrs discussed the report and agreed to continue work to find out more about the implications of a possible acquisition.	
2022/21/FC	The next meeting will be at 7pm on Wednesday 18 May 2022, Frome Town Hall and Zoom	

Table 1 - Agenda items

The Chair closed the meeting at 8.51pm