

Minutes of a meeting of Frome Town Council

Wednesday 5 October 2022, 7pm
Frome Town Hall and Zoom

Present:

In the Town Hall: Tracey Ashford, Fiona Barrows, Sara Butler, Philip Campagna, Anita Collier, Carla Collenette, Mark Dorrington, Nick Dove, Anne Hills, Andy Jones, Polly Lamb, Lisa Merryweather, Ben Still, Steve Tanner, Mel Usher, Andy Wrintmore

In attendance:

Sarah Dyke (Somerset Cllr), Will Palmer (Digital Community Connector for Health Connections Mendip), David Lassman (Frome Museum), Simon Barfoot (Donate IT), Dawn Denton (Somerset Cllr), John Clarke (MDC Cllr), Shane Collins (MDC Cllr), Paul Wynne (Town Clerk), Sarah Williams (Business Manager), Rachel Griffin (Marketing and Communications Manager), Kate Hellard (Community Development Manager), Paul Bartlett (Interim Environment Manager), Laura Flaherty (Executive Assistant to the Town Clerk and Mayor)

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

3 members of the public were in attendance on Zoom

To watch to the discussion in full visit <https://bit.ly/3dU8zdL>

Minute Ref	Agenda Item	Action
2022/65/FC	<p>The meeting started at 7pm</p> <p>1a. Apologies for absence None was received</p> <p>1b. Declaration of members' interests Andy Jones declared an other registrable interest in item 5</p> <p>1c. Minutes from the last meeting on 7 September 2022 Carla Collenette proposed an amendment to the minutes to better reflect discussion by adding in the following detail of the discussion. This was inserted on page 2 of the minutes:</p> <p>'Charlotte Pidgeon from Frome NCT gave a summary of the petition to reinstate community and home births as part of RUH maternity services. The petition could be viewed here https://bit.ly/3LWDV1Z. Charlotte urged Frome Town Cllrs to support it. '</p> <p>The minutes as amended of the Frome Town Council meeting held on 7 September 2022 were approved as a true record of the meeting and signed by the Chair.</p>	

	Seconded by Fiona Barrows, agreed unanimously.	
2022/66/FC	<p>2. <u>Questions and comments from the public and Cllrs</u> Andy Wrintmore arrived at 7.07pm</p> <p>Gill Fone requested that a pad lock on a gate in Foundry Barton was replaced, also for the Ranger help to plant a tree in celebration of the Queen's Platinum Jubilee. Gill also asked about the possibility of a town centre post office. Paul Wynne said he would find out and let Gill know. Finally, she asked about the St Aldhelm images removed from the railings from the town centre and when they will be displayed. Paul said a location had not been identified but suggestions were welcome. In the meantime, the images were safe in storage.</p> <p>Mel Usher requested that the Town Clerk invite David Warburton or his representative to the next council meeting to inform the people of Frome and the council about his current and future position as a member of parliament.</p> <p>Mel also asked the Town Clerk to invite owners of former Shoe Zone site to attend the next council meeting to explain their proposals for the building which had been empty for 5 years and was a blight on the town.</p> <p>Anita Collier noted the life belt at Welshmill weir was missing. Paul said this would be looked into.</p> <p>Mick Dunk asked if FTC would reconsider increasing the recent grant funding to Citizens Advice Mendip (CAM). Kate Hellard explained that the substantial grant round that CAM had applied to was massively oversubscribed and like other successful applicants they were awarded 50% of the amount they requested. FTC Cllrs had agreed the next round of Substantial Grants would be dedicated to the cost of living crisis and Kate would be speaking with Ian Byworth, Chief Executive of CAM about possible additional financial support. She explained she had also spoken to MDC officers who were also doing the same thing.</p> <p>A group of residents of Weymouth Road asked FTC for help in communicating a 400 signature petition against the recent resident parking scheme to SCC. Peter Wheelhouse noted that Steve Deakin, Parking Manager at SCC, had agreed to attend the next council meeting on 16 November to provide a briefing and answer questions. Paul Wynne noted that he thought many Cllrs shared their concerns about residents parking and it was</p>	<p>RH</p> <p>PWh</p> <p>PWy</p> <p>PWy</p> <p>RH</p> <p>KH</p>

	<p>important to collect as much data as possible over the impact of the pilot scheme in order to have impact on whether it continued. He asked for this to be emailed to him.</p>	
<p>2022/67/FC</p>	<p>3. A short presentation from David Lassman, Frome Museum about the Frome Hoard coming back to Frome To view the presentation in full please visit https://bit.ly/3Clht9C</p> <p>David Lassman, Frome Museum, gave a little background to the discovery of the hoard.</p> <p>The hoard was discovered by Dave Crisp in a village just outside of Frome. 52,000 coins were found that dated from 253 – 305 AD. The hoard was declared treasure and was currently in the Museum of Somerset in Taunton. Frome Museum were in early talks with South West Heritage to bring back the hoard to Frome with the hope of having it on display in 2024 for a period of six months.</p> <p>David explained he was in talks with Health Connections Mendip to roll out a heritage connector scheme. He hoped heritage could be used as another way to connect people and give hope and joy.</p> <p>Mel Usher proposed that it was publicised that FTC supported the return of the Frome hoard, so that the Museum could use this in their own publicity. There was a unanimous show of support for this amongst Cllrs.</p> <p>Tracey Ashford suggested involving the arts and suggested living actors at events to help bring history alive. David was keen on this idea.</p> <p>Steve Tanner, as a representative of Friends of Frome Station, was keen to create a historical time line at the train station and suggested linking up. David agreed to keep in contact.</p> <p>Philip Campagna asked about plans to link with schools and therefore access educational funding. David explained they were in the process of putting together plans. In early spring they were planning to approach national heritage lottery. They were also looking for funding from various organisations. Education was at the heart of their plans.</p> <p>David was thanked for his inspiring contribution.</p>	

<p>2022/68/FC</p>	<p>4. A presentation on digital inclusion from Somerset County Cllr Sarah Dyke</p> <p>Sarah Dyke gave a background to her project ‘Laptops4learners’. She explained how a lack of access to technology affected learning and access to services. It was estimated every household was hoarding five devices they never used, many of which were still usable and would probably end up in landfill. Sarah approached a computer recycling company, Blackmore Ricotech. They in turn established DonateIT CIC. The idea was for local groups to collect unwanted IT, send it DonateIT which would refurbish or recycle it and then disseminate it to those in need.</p> <p>Simon Barfoot, DonateIT, also noted there was a huge digital divide. Many services were only available online and those without access to IT were disadvantaged. He said giving someone the right IT gives them the tools to fix their problems/issues. The only costs in the whole project were employing the four IT support workers. Income from recycled parts and metals enabled the project to buy new IT. The scheme was people and planet friendly. They had also been able to help support refugees.</p> <p>Will Palmer, Health Connections Mendip, noted benefits of the projects were being felt in Frome. In the last year he had distributed 80 devices and made available a number of sim cards with data. Will also ran a digital café on a Thursday which helped to build confidence in using IT.</p> <p>Questions centred on the logistics of setting up a similar scheme in Frome. The only things required were a secure room to keep donations until they could be collected by DonateIT. Paul Wynne offered to receive into the Town Hall any donations and to store them securely.</p> <p>Anita Collier said it was a wonderful project with so much scope. She asked what happened if a device went wrong? Simon explained there was a lifetime warranty.</p> <p>Max Wide said it was a fantastic scheme. He urged Cllrs not to forget the lack of connectivity into services, particularly in rural areas.</p> <p>Simon Barfoot also noted Somerset Waste Partnership, ran the ‘fixy van’ which travelled to rural areas to help with repairs.</p> <p>Sarah Dyke hoped the scheme would work with warm spaces planned for the upcoming winter so people could connect.</p>	
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<p>2022/69/FC</p>	<p>5. For decision – Financing for refurbishment of Victoria Park toilets Andy Jones left the room at 8.10pm given his declared interest.</p> <p>A summary of the report was given by Viv Whitaker.</p> <p>Mark Dorrington thanked Viv for driving the project forward.</p> <p>Sarah Williams clarified that the proposed interest payments were fixed over 25 years.</p> <p>The recommendation was to “approve the Business Manager on behalf of Frome Town Council seeking the approval of the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities to apply for a PWLB loan of £152,000 over the borrowing term of 25 years for the refurbishment of Victoria Park, Frome toilets and café building. The annual loan repayments will come to £11,091 pa (5.41% interest rate at 27/09/22).</p> <p>“There will be no increase in the precept for the purpose of these loan repayments.”</p> <p>Proposed by Mark Dorrington seconded by Anita Collier agreed by majority. Carla Collette and Lisa Merryweather abstained.</p>	<p>SW</p>
<p>2022/70/FC</p>	<p>6. For information – An update on the Football Club project Mel Usher provided a verbal update.</p> <p>On Monday 3 October a public meeting was held at the Football Club to discuss community ownership and 125 people were in attendance. The thoughts and ideas gathered at the meeting would be collated and shared publicly. By way of a show of hands amongst attends virtually all were in favour of going down the route of a community owned football club. Mel felt confident it was the right route as they were being guided by the Football Supports Association, who had been successful over 40 times in establishing community ownership. Mel thanked all staff and Cllrs who turned out, it had been a very professional meeting. He also thanked Nick White who chaired the meeting so well.</p> <p>He explained the project group would move fairly quickly now and that when the time and conditions were right delegated authority would need to be given to expedite the option to buy the ground for £1.</p> <p>Fiona Barrows asked if FTC would take on legal responsibilities for ground? Mel explained a lease would be prepared to the</p>	

	<p>football club; they would be responsible for all repairs maintenance and health and safety.</p> <p>Mel Usher proposed the following recommendation:</p> <p>When the time and conditions are right delegated authority be given to the Town Clerk and RFO, in consultation with Cllrs Usher and Collier, to expedite the option to purchase the stadium and club for £1</p> <p>Seconded by Sara Butler, agreed unanimously.</p>	PWy/SW
2022/71/FC	<p>7. For information – Update on staff matters Cllrs noted the report</p> <p>Fiona Barrows requested that job roles funded externally were clearly noted in future reports.</p>	LF
2022/72/FC	<p>8. For decision – updates to constitution chapters Cllrs noted the report.</p> <p>Andy Jones proposed an amendment in Chapter 6, on page 3 to the wording of the Mayor’s allowance for clarification to:</p> <p>‘5 Mayor’s allowance The Mayor may be paid expenses to meet the expenses of office and a Mayor’s allowance is usually established for this purpose as part of the annual budget making process.’</p> <p>Seconded by Anne Hills, agreed by majority. Ben Still abstained</p> <p>Andy Jones proposed to amend the review dates of chapters 6 and 8 to bring them in line with Chapter 10, this being November 2025.</p> <p>The recommendation was to approve the updates to chapters 6, 8 and 10 of the constitution</p> <p>Proposed by Andy Jones, seconded by Philip Campagna, agreed by majority. Tracey Ashford abstained</p>	
2022/73/FC	<p>The next meeting will be at 7pm on Wednesday 16 November 2022, Frome Town Hall and Zoom</p>	

Table 1 - Agenda items

The Chair closed the meeting at 8.34pm