

FROME TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the Town Matters Committee

Wednesday 20 April 2022, 7pm
Zoom and Frome Town Hall

Present:
Councillors:

In the Chamber: Rich Ackroyd, Ali Barclay, Rob Collett, Anita Collier, Nick Dove (Chair), Mark Dorrington, Anne Hills, Paul Horton, Steve Tanner

In attendance:

Cllr Shane Collins (MDC Cllr), Ashley Reay and Rex Eastment (Mendip Community Speed watch), Peter Wheelhouse (Deputy Town Clerk), Nikki Brain (Resilience Manager), Nikki Brain (Resilience Manager), Beccy Byrne (Marketing and Communications Officer) Sarah Williams (Business Manager), Jane Llewellyn (Planning & Development Manager) Sean Powell (Town Hall Steward)

7 members of the public in the Chamber
1 member of the public on Zoom

Minute Ref	Agenda Item	Action
2022/10/TM	<p>Meeting started at 7pm.</p> <p>1a. Apologies for absence Received from Sara Butler, John Nelson, Andy Palmer and Scott Ward.</p> <p>Proposed by Anita Collier, Seconded by Mark Dorrington to accept the apologies - agreed unanimously.</p> <p>1b. Declaration of members' interests None was received</p> <p>1c. Minutes from the last meeting on 23 February 2022 The minutes of the Town Matters Committee meeting held on 23 February 2022 were approved as a true record of the meeting and signed by the Chair.</p> <p>Proposed by Anne Hills, seconded by Steve Tanner, agreed unanimously.</p>	
2022/11/TM	<p>2. Questions and comments from the public and Cllrs Rich Ackroyd promoted the two upcoming concerts at the Cheese & Grain in aid of the appeal for Ukraine.</p>	

	<p>Shane Collins noted the next Frome Hoedown was happening on Sunday 24 April.</p>	
<p>2022/12/TM</p>	<p>3. For information and discussion – Update on major development proposals in Frome and potential next steps</p> <p>A summary of the report was given by Jane Llewellyn. She focused on Saxonvale and Selwood Garden Community.</p> <p>Jane noted that they were starting to see more applications outside of the development boundary and applications that were more speculative, for example, Marston Lane and Innox Hill. Jane explained because MDC had been unable to provide a five year land supply, the Local Plan policies were much weaker and likely to have led to more applications outside the boundary.</p> <p>Steve Tanner gave an overview of the role of the Planning Committee.</p> <p>Rich Ackroyd asked when MDC goes, what will happen to the five year land supply? Jane explained her feeling was that until there was a new local plan she would assume the figures for the five year land supply would remain.</p> <p>Bill Lowe, former Planning Officer for MDC, explained the development pressure on Frome was to do with the embargo on the River Parrot and Brue area where development had been discouraged by Natural England because of the phosphate delivery into the Levels. Frome drained the other way into Avon, and this was why there was much more peripheral developments. The problem with the Local Plan was because it had not been reviewed and therefore the policies had limited weighting. In the local plan housing growth was south of the Mount in the Frome area, Bill said this could be used to object to developments on the west and north sides of Frome. He felt some schemes needed to be objected to on principal. He hoped for stronger leadership in FTC rather than working with a developer to get a better outcome.</p> <p>Mel Usher felt FTC should put more pressure on MDC to finish their review of the local plan. They should also adopt the guidance FTC produced on sustainable buildings.</p> <p>Neil Howlett felt Frome had been let down by MDC and Highways. There was a real threat, if decisions were made in Taunton, Frome would have a worse deal. He thought FTC</p>	

	<p>should work out a way of having real influence even if not complete control of planning. He felt what was missing from the local plan was employment. Designs of homes should be suitable for working in them. Neil also thought there should be a requirement for larger developers to be honest, for example, through viability assessments and declaring profit. Any results of a travel plan should be published, and the developer should report back to the planning authority. These plans should co ordinate with a town’s trave plan. He said there was a need to look into a policy to prevent under occupation.</p> <p>Pat, a member of the Civic Society, felt given the size of Frome, it punched below its weight in how we have dealt with MDC in the past. She felt FTC held back and kept talking about reserved matters, none of which were guaranteed to happen. Pat said the focus should be on the question ‘is this a sustainable development?’ If no, FTC should say no and force a new application. She wanted to see Cllrs arguing smarter and to take the opportunity of a new authority and start a relationship of equals. She said the Civic Society were happy to work with FTC to achieve this.</p> <p>Rich Ackroyd said he agreed with Pat that FTC needed a strong response, but Cllrs needed to engage and have an open mind, to get a better outcome. If you just say no all the time, you get ignored.</p> <p>Anita Collier asked about the impact on traffic and said more pressure should be put on Highways. Peter Wheelhouse noted FTC were working closely with strategic commissioning manager in Highways, who recognized a need for strategy and was working hard to push this through.</p> <p>Mel Usher said FTC should be campaigning more, let people in the town know more such as what are the implications and outcomes.</p> <p>Ali Barclay suggested a leaflet about planning in a simple way. Including simple, accessible information such as at what stage could the public object to a planning application.</p> <p>Shane Collins asked what was considered a house, were those off the grid included in the figures? Jane explained if planning consent were given for any dwelling then they would be included in the data.</p> <p>Steve Tanner noted there was a real issue with the hidden homeless. He felt Frome should demand a minimum of 40%</p>	
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	affordable housing which happens in Wells, there was no reason this shouldn't happen in Frome.	
2022/13/TM	<p>4. For information and discussion - Frome's Speed Indicator Device</p> <p>Ashley Reay and Rex from Mendip Community Speed watch gave a short presentation.</p> <p>Speeding had increased since lockdown, in some parts of Frome it had doubled. 10,000 people had been caught speeding in Frome in the past 12 months. There was a discussion about the worst offenders and the issues of generalisations without using data.</p> <p>There was also a brief discussion of the Speed Indicator Devices (SID) and other traffic measures particularly on roads like Portway, North Parade, Berkley Road etc.</p>	
2022/14/TM	<p>5. For information and discussion – School Streets</p> <p>Nikki Brain gave a summary of the report and the background to the School Streets project.</p> <p>Andy Jones hoped to see some baseline data from the project. Nikki explained they were working with Schools using Mode Shift Stars, which had initial data collection. FTC would also monitor the data over 18 months to see if there had been a modal shift. They would also gather safety information. She noted evaluation would be really important and there would be flexibility to make changes where things clearly didn't work throughout the pilot.</p>	
2022/15/TM	The next meeting will be at 7pm on Wednesday 15 June 2022, Frome Town Hall and Zoom.	

The Chair closed the meeting at 8.32pm