

Minutes of a meeting of Frome Town Council

Wednesday 14 June 2023, 7pm
Frome Town Hall and Zoom

Present:

In the Town Hall: Fiona Barrows, Sara Butler (Chair), Mark Dorrington, Anne Hills, Polly Lamb, Lisa Merryweather, Ben Still, Steve Tanner, Max Wide

In attendance:

Dawn Denton (Somerset Cllr), Paul Wynne (Town Clerk), Rachel Griffin (Marketing & Communications Manager), Hannah Stopford (Community Project Officer), Nikki Cox (Community Project Officer), Becca Evans (Business Administrator), Laura Flaherty (Executive Assistant to the Town Clerk and Mayor)

1 member of the public was in attendance at Frome Town Hall

1 member of the public was in attendance on Zoom.

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

| Minute Ref | Agenda Item | Action |
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| | <p>Prior to the start of the formal meeting, Ben Still gave a presentation on behalf of Keep it Frome</p> <p>Ben Still gave a brief presentation about Keep it Frome. The campaign was launched by Loop Frome and was a collaboration with Glimpse, a network of creatives to use skills for good. The campaign was funded by Feed the Earth.</p> <p>Ben explained Frome could have its own vision for a circular economy and needed to be a reflection of Frome itself. There were five broad categories for Frome’s circular economy, growing, sharing (gift economy, no exchange of money) i.e. Share boxes, repairing, reusing and upcycling, reimagining (what a resource actually is, imagination is a resource)</p> <p>Ben said it was important to create lasting systemic change in Frome. We don't only require new initiatives and systems. Although this is essential we also need Frome residents to have a shared understanding of things like circular economy, as well as a sense of pride, ownership, and active participation. Through this, our collective awareness as a town around issues like regenerative economics will strengthen and can in time become the norm.</p> <p>Ben explained some of their next steps were to build on their platform, tell the story of the circular economy and generate</p> | |

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| | <p>real ways for people to participate, a permanent mural at Badcox, circular pop up shops and a shared online platform for people to share resources.</p> | |
| 2023/50/FC | <p>The formal Council meeting started at 7.13pm.</p> <p>In the absence of the Chair and deputy chair, Lisa Merryweather proposed Sara Butler as Chair for the meeting, seconded by Mark Dorrington, agreed unanimously.</p> | |
| 2023/51/FC | <p>2a. Apologies for absence There were no FTC Cllrs present via Zoom. Anne Hills proposed to accept apologies from Philip Campagna, Carla Collenette, Anita Collier, Nick Dove, Andy Jones and Mel Usher, seconded by Polly Lamb, agreed unanimously.</p> <p>2b. Declaration of members' interests None was received</p> <p>2c. Minutes from the last meeting on 17 May 2023 The minutes of the Annual Frome Town Council meeting held on 17 May 2023 were approved as a true record of the meeting and signed by the Chair.</p> <p>Proposed by Lisa Merryweather, seconded by Steve Tanner, agreed by majority.</p> | |
| 2023/52/FC | <p>3. Question from public and Cllrs, including Somerset Cllrs Dawn Denton asked about the dog control in place at Victoria Park and noted the rules were not clear. Rachel Griffin explained new signs had been installed that explain during the summer period dogs had to be on leads between 10am and 6.30pm. Dawn also asked about the current status of Discover Frome. Rachel explained the Black Swan want to use the Round Tower for another purpose and have given Discover Frome notice until the end of August. Rachel was looking for a new location. A proposal would be brought to Council in due course.</p> <p>Anne Hills had recently attended a Fair Frome SANG meeting; a notable point of discussion was with a move to unitary council there was some difference in the way council tax was discounted which meant some people were losing out. Anne asked if Dawn could look into the issue. Dawn said she would investigate and get back to Anne. Lenka Grimes of Fair Frome asked to also be kept informed.</p> <p>A member of the public raised a concern about BBQ's he had seen taking place at Rodden Meadow which had left burn</p> | DD |

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| | <p>marks. Paul Wynne noted BBQ's were not permitted on FTC land. He highlighted the challenge was in policing and enforcing this as signage was often vandalised.</p> <p>Fiona Barrows noted Great Big Green Week was running from 10 – 18 June. She thanked staff for all their efforts. Also on 19th July there would be a public meeting on Frome's action on climate and biodiversity.</p> | |
| 2023/53/FC | <p>4. For Decision - Community Grants</p> <p>A summary of the report was given by Lisa Merryweather.</p> <p>Fiona Barrows asked for an amendment to wording in the terms and conditions for 4f. This was to clarify wording for detailing cost of time for staff. Lisa suggested they worked on the wording together and come back to Council with proposed changes.</p> <p>Mark Dorrington asked if the Chair of the grants committee would be the Mayor every year. Paul Wynne confirmed this would be the case.</p> <p>The recommendations were:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. For Council to agree to the creation of a new Grants Committee 2. For Council to agree to the chair being the Mayor, Philip Campagna (for 2023/24) <p>Proposed by Fiona Barrows, seconded by Steve Tanner, agreed unanimously.</p> | LM/FB |
| 2023/54/FC | <p>5. For Decision - Poverty update</p> <p>A summary of the report was given by Anne Hills. She highlighted how FTC approached community development work including helping to build community resilience. FTC's work has focussed on two areas: first, the <i>acute</i> challenge of trying to address the cost of living crisis and, second, the <i>chronic</i> problem of deprivation in the town. She noted the progress made on the former as detailed in the report and steps supporting communities to address the latter are ongoing. She described the approach FTC takes in acting as convener, facilitator, enabler to help people and groups to help themselves. The central thrust of FTC's work is to stop residents reaching crisis point. She highlighted that FTC has been highly agile during the Covid pandemic helped us develop our skills and approach to support residents in the current cost of living crisis and the next one.</p> | |

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| | <p>Anne highlighted the way we work is strengths/asset based and highly participatory and aims to move residents to a point where they are much more resilient and able to help themselves as residents and/or communities.</p> <p>Hannah Stopford also summarised her report detailing her work in the St John’s Road area. She noted that unless we knew what the challenges were in a community, there was little chance of working the community to help improve things. St John's was an area FTC didn't know much about. She then described what she has been doing in the community.</p> <p>Hannah noted that the headlines were lack of a community space, centralised support not always suitable (for example some residents were not keen on replicating some of cost of living initiatives like share boxes etc), there was a rich and diverse community and a desire to increase connection.</p> <p>Hannah explained that next steps included building relationships with key members of the community and other stakeholders. Follow up ideas discussed so far were a jumble trail, creating a community garden (this would joint project with social housing provider Aster), community noticeboard, regular litter picks, a summer fair and street parties. Hannah said that as more residents become involved and more feel that they have more agency in their area, FTC can step back having helped to build enough community resilience to keep things going.</p> <p>Lisa Merryweather said it was lovely to hear about the work and it was heartwarming to hear about community engagement and the difference it was making.</p> <p>Steve Tanner asked Hannah about level of engagement from the door knocking work. Hannah explained she had around 45 in depth conversations from knocking on around 250 doors.</p> <p>Fiona Barrows asked about personal mobility, in relation to the LCWIP and accessible routes. She asked if Hannah had had any feedback on routes into town? Hannah explained active residents were very happy. Some residents with significant mobility challenges felt unable to access local services let alone access the town centre without being driven.</p> <p>Lenka Grimes of Fair Frome noted St Johns was the second largest area in the town served by Fair Frome deliveries . The found that lots of families liked food at 5 and the offer of hot food as part of the holiday activities. These services are</p> | |
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| | <p>provided at the Cricket Club, the Football Club and Hayesdown School in particular. They found more people accessing food that way. Lenka noted that Roddenbury Close community rooms also a good space.</p> <p>Fiona Burrows asked about the number of refugee families in Frome. Nikki Cox replied that there were 56 Ukrainian families on the current Homes for Ukraine scheme and 6 families from elsewhere.</p> <p>Max Wide asked about the work between Somerset Council and the NHS and the establishment of a community hub. And in particular the NHS owned old Shoe Zone store in Market Place. Paul Wynne noted with regard to the Shoe Zone store that the building didn't turn out to be the right place for a hub and that the NHS was planning to sell it.</p> <p>Paul noted that SC social care commissioners are working with ICG and to explore developing a community hub. FTC is trying to bring all the different commissioners together and to add value by exploring what a Frome based local solution might be. Max noted it would be good to have a record of the strands of commissioning activity across the town to avoid duplication.</p> <p>Lisa suggested that the Football Club venue would be a good place to build on the work that Hannah had been doing. Hannah agreed and said the Football Club was a good venue serving a larger community than just the St John's area.</p> <p>Fiona Barrows asked about the future of the poverty programme. Anne explained it would be good to have an emergency response team ready for the next crisis as the most deprived were always hit the hardest. And she said it was important to continue with the chronic work to build community resilience.</p> <p>Paul informed Council that the Community Development Manager would be leaving in July/August.</p> <p>The recommendations were:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Agree the ongoing delivery of the Frome Refugee Welcome Hub, on the basis of 100% external funding. 2. Note the progress to date and ongoing activity in the above table. <p>Proposed by Fiona Barrows, seconded by Mark Dorrington, agreed unanimously.</p> | <p>PWy</p> <p>KH</p> |
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| | Sara Butler said thank you to Town Crier, Mike Bishop, who had announced his retirement in November. She noted he had performed amazing duties over 17 years for which he was appreciated. The room gave him a round of applause. | |
| 2022/55/FC | The next meeting will be at 7pm on Wednesday 14 June 2023, Frome Town Hall and Zoom | |

The Chair closed the meeting at 8.01 pm

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