

Minutes of a meeting of Frome Town Council

Wednesday 12 July 2023, 7pm
Frome Town Hall and Zoom

Present:

In the Town Hall: Fiona Barrows, Philip Campagna (Chair), Carla Collette, Anita Collier, Nick Dove, Mark Dorrington, Anne Hills, Polly Lamb, Lisa Merryweather, Ben Still, Steve Tanner, Mel Usher, Andy Wrintmore

In attendance:

James Hamilton (Landscape Architect), Paul Wynne (Town Clerk), Rachel Griffin (Marketing & Communications Manager), Rob Holden (Environment Manager), Peter Wheelhouse (Deputy Town Clerk and Economic Development and Regeneration Manager), Sean Powell (Town Hall Steward), Kate Hellard (Community Development Manager), Laura Flaherty (Executive Assistant to the Town Clerk and Mayor)

6 members of the public were in attendance at Frome Town Hall
1 member of the public was in attendance on Zoom.

To watch to the discussion in full visit: bit.ly/3DADJIL

| Minute Ref | Agenda Item | Action |
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| 2023/56/FC | <p>The meeting started at 7pm.</p> <p>1a. Apologies for absence There were no FTC Cllrs present via Zoom.</p> <p>Andy Jones proposed to accept apologies from Sara Butler and Max Wide, seconded by Fiona Barrows, agreed unanimously.</p> <p>Paul Wynne noted that Anne Hills was running late.</p> <p>1b. Declaration of members' interests None was received</p> <p>1c. Minutes from the last meeting on 14 June 2023 Some amendments were made for accuracy including the name of the organisation Be the Earth which had mistakenly been named Feed the Earth, the date of the next meeting was corrected and a minute number.</p> <p>The minutes of the Frome Town Council meeting held on 14 June 2023 were approved as a true record of the meeting and signed by the Chair.</p> | |

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| | <p>Proposed by Lisa Merryweather , seconded by Steve Tanner, agreed by majority.</p> | |
| <p>2023/57/FC</p> | <p>2. <u>Question from public and Cllrs, including Somerset Cllrs</u> Andy Jones thanked Rob Holden and the Ranger team for their hard work after arrival of travellers on the Showfield site. He also thanked Mark Dorrington, the Somerset Enforcement team, the police and bailiffs for their help. Rob noted that the Ranger team had spent three days clearing the site of rubbish and waste.</p> <p>Gill Fone asked if FTC could do anything about the overgrown vegetation on the Somerset Council side of the river bank and whether FTC could take it over from SC . She also asked if street lights at Foundry Barton and the spot lights at Foundry Barton steps could be fixed. Gill asked if some of the remaining EMR for Foundry Barton could be used to fix the street light. Also Gill asked if the owner of an uncared for small open space at Foundry Barton had been found so the area could be improved. Rob Holden explained that it was not FTC land, but they would continue to try to find the contact details of the owners.</p> <p>Regarding the traffic lights in Market Place, Peter Wheelhouse noted that SC have changed the timings so that the time for pedestrian crossing would be increased.</p> <p>Anita Collier had received an email from a resident who was concerned about the maintenance at Easthill cemetery. Mark Dorrington said he had visited that day and was not concerned about the maintenance; it was clean and tidy as always.</p> <p>Nick Dove asked if Somerset could be written to respond with information about who had responsibility for the old toilet block by the steps in Palmer Street which was now attracting rats and what could be done about them. Fiona Burrows also requested that SC be asked to investigate Apple Alley about which she'd had complaints.</p> <p>Andy Jones congratulated Sally Smiles, Critchill School, who had been awarded careers leader of the year. Philip said she would like to give Sally a Mayor's commendation.</p> <p>Paul Wynne noted that Kate Hellard, Community Development Manager, would be leaving FTC at the end of the month, he thanked her for her contributions over the years.</p> | <p>RH</p> <p>PWy</p> <p>PC</p> <p>PC</p> |

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| | <p>Steve Tanner asked Dawn Denton if Somerset could confirm that if the school does not get built at Edmund Park the s106 money should not go back to the developer. Kate Hellard noted she had recently agreed to look at educational provision over the coming months and include projected places, vocational training etc. and the hope was to include vacant school site land as well.</p> <p>Carla Collenette asked Kate if she knew anymore about the recent consultation on Selwood School becoming a secondary school. Kate noted that SC were going to consult on whether to explore a 2 tier rather than 3 tier school system in Frome.</p> | <p>DD</p> |
| <p>2023/58/FC</p> | <p>3. For Decision – work to invigorate our town centre Andy Wrintmore arrived at 7.27pm Anne Hills arrived at 7.29pm</p> <p>A summary of the report was given by Mel Usher.</p> <p>Lisa Merryweather said she would be keen to explore how the remit could go beyond retail and business and into the wider town.</p> <p>Ben Still noted the mention of AI in the report which he felt was a significant topic that needed more discussion. He explained the report portrayed the positives, but he felt there were risks and questions that needed to be asked in a public forum. Mel Usher explained they weren't advocating its use, just that it was an option being utilised across the country.</p> <p>Fiona Barrows asked about the budget currently allocated to the Town Centre and how the money requested was different. She also asked how much of that budget had been spent already? She also queried spending all of the Discover Frome EMR on this budget. Paul Wynne asked her to email her questions for Sarah Williams to provide an answer.</p> <p>Mark Dorrington noted he was working with Rob to draft the Town Centre Ranger JD.</p> <p>Polly Lamb asked if the Chamber of Commerce had been invited to be part of the advisory groups. Lisa Merryweather noted she had met with Andy Palmer about liaising with Chamber to ensure any work wasn't doubled up.</p> | <p>FB</p> |

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| | <p>Carla Collenette said what she loved about FTC was that this was not our responsibility, but it effected how people felt about the town and the perception of safety, so it was something FTC should do. She asked if the advisory group was open to public, and who would be invited? Lisa Merryweather noted there was a lot of expertise in house and in the town and the advisory group would include both. Opening the Advisory Group meeting to the public was possible.</p> <p>The recommendations were:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To support the findings of the Town Centre Aesthetics Group, a total of £55k is allocated from EMR 358 for the following: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. £30k is allocated to employ, on a one-year experimental basis, a dedicated Town Centre Ranger, under the management of Rob Holden, to deliver a programme of repairing and replacing street furniture, removing graffiti, work on areas such as repairing and painting railings, supporting more planters, cleaning pavements, removing weeds and responsive after over exuberant night time activities. This will act as a trial which, if successful, could attract funding from other sources including from a BID. b. £10k is allocated from this EMR to cover additional costs for capital items, under the budget management of Rob Holden c. £15k is allocated to carry out repair and replacement of street furniture, for example, by the Town Centre Ranger, under the budget management of Rob Holden <p>Proposed by Anita Collier, seconded by Andy Wrintmore, agreed by majority. Fiona Barrow abstained.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Establish a Discover Frome Advisory Group to take forward the revamp of Discover Frome developing the ‘What’s On’ by the end of the financial year utilising the approved EMR 390. The Group will be led by Cllr Merryweather with the support of Rachel Griffin. <p>Proposed by Fiona Barrows, seconded by Ben Still, agreed by majority. Carla Collenette abstained.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Establish a Town Centre Partnership Advisory Group: to explore the merits and function of a Town Centre Partnership Officer; to explore how this post might be funded; and return a report to Council in 3 months with | <p>RH/SW</p> <p>SW</p> <p>SW</p> <p>LM/RG</p> <p>MU/ND/PWh</p> |
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| | <p>recommendations. The Group to be led by Cllrs Usher and Dove and supported by Peter Wheelhouse.</p> <p>Proposed by Nick Dove, seconded by Andy Jones, agreed by majority. Fiona Barrows, Carla Collenette and Polly Lamb abstained.</p> <p>4. Support ID Verde in complying with Somerset Council's street cleansing contract by establishing a monthly formal minuted managerial and Cllr level meeting comprising Somerset Council, ID Verde and FTC. This meeting could also be useful in exploring innovative ideas including devolution of services.</p> <p>Proposed by Mark Dorrington, seconded by Anita Collier, agreed unanimously.</p> <p>5. Write to owners of vacant properties asking them to support the effort to ensure that our town looks and feels vibrant and open for business and hold them to account for the condition of their property.</p> <p>(Anita asked that letters were not posted into empty shops)</p> <p>Proposed by Anita Collier, seconded by Mel Usher, agreed unanimously.</p> | <p>RH</p> <p>PWh/ND</p> |
| <p>2023/59/FC</p> | <p>4. For Decision – to establish a Community Woodland (near Spring Gardens)</p> <p>Mark Dorrington gave an introduction, and a summary of the report was given by Rob Holden and James Hamilton.</p> <p>Anne Hills asked if some of the budget could be used now to fence the site to prevent future fly grazing. Rob said that made a lot of sense and would secure a favourable outcome.</p> <p>Andy Jones asked if the aspiration was to set up an organisation to manage the site or would it be an FTC led project with ad hoc support. Rob explained it would be the latter, but it could be looked into in due course. Once planted, the woodland would require minimal management - a few days a year.</p> <p>Sam Evans suggested applying to the Rural England Prosperity fund for a grant. Rob said he was happy to explore other options of funding in the future.</p> <p>The recommendations were:</p> | |

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| | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Work in partnership with the community and especially the local group to establish a community woodland on the edge of Frome near Spring Gardens 2. Take out a 99 year lease with the land owner on a peppercorn rent 3. Approve the expenditure listed in the report 4. Resolve the fly grazing issue 5. Work in partnership with the local community to manage the woodland in future <p>Proposed by Nick Dove, seconded by Mark Dorrington, agreed unanimously.</p> | <p>All RH</p> |
| <p>2023/60/FC</p> | <p>5. For decision – Grants Committee remit and membership Laura Flaherty gave a summary of the report.</p> <p>Anita Collier asked if the remit could include any future grants. Paul Wynne explained that the remit only included those grants that currently existed. Any future grants would need to be agreed by Council.</p> <p>The recommendations were:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Approve the remit of the Grants Committee 2. Approve the membership of the Grants Committee <p>Philip Campagna (Chair) Anne Hills Andy Jones Lisa Merryweather Steve Tanner Andy Wrintmore</p> <p>Proposed Andy Wrintmore, seconded by Ben Still, agreed unanimously.</p> | |
| <p>2023/61/FC</p> | <p>6. For decision – Membership of the Oversight Committee</p> <p>The proposed membership was:</p> <p>Tracey Ashford Fiona Barrows Mark Dorrington (Chair) Nick Dove Anne Hills Andy Jones Polly Lamb Ben Still Steve Tanner Mel Usher</p> | |

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| | <p>The recommendation was to approve the proposed membership</p> <p>Proposed by Anne Hills, seconded by Andy Jones, agreed unanimously.</p> | |
| 2023/62/FC | The next meeting will be at 7pm on Wednesday 9 August 2023, Frome Town Hall and Zoom | |

The Chair closed the meeting at 8.20pm