

Minutes of a meeting of Frome Town Council

Wednesday 6 September 2023, 7pm
Frome Town Hall and Zoom

Present:

In the Town Hall: Tracey Ashford, Fiona Barrows, Philip Campagna (Chair), Carla Collenette, Anita Collier, Mark Dorrington, Anne Hills, Andy Jones, Lisa Merryweather, Ben Still, Steve Tanner, Max Wide

In attendance:

Adam Boyden (SC Cllr), Martin Dimery (SC Cllr), Dawn Denton, (SC Cllr), Philip Goodwin (Vice Chair of CBS), Paul Wynne (Town Clerk), Rachel Griffin (Marketing & Communications Manager), Peter Wheelhouse (Deputy Town Clerk and Economic Development and Regeneration Manager), Hannah Stopford (Engagement Lead), Nikki Cox (Partnership Lead), Sarah Williams (Business Manager), Becca Evans (Business Administrator)

5 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:

www.youtube.com/watch?v=RZxS_dGsZOM&t=4815s

Minute Ref	Agenda Item	Action
2023/68/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, Nick Dove, Polly Lamb, Mel Usher and Andy Wrintmore, seconded by Mark Dorrington, agreed unanimously.</p> <p>1b. Declaration of members' interests None was received</p> <p>1c. Minutes from the last meeting on 9 August 2023 The minutes of the Frome Town Council meeting held on 9 August 2023 were approved as a true record of the meeting and signed by the Chair.</p> <p>Proposed by Steve Tanner, seconded by Fiona Barrows, agreed unanimously.</p>	
2023/69/FC	<p>2. Question from public and Cllrs, including Somerset Cllrs A member of the public, Adam, raised his concerns about the dangers of the junction of the A362 and how there were often</p>	

	<p>near misses leading to accidents. He asked if something could be done to make it safer? Anita Collier noted that the Town Clerk had written to Somerset Council on behalf of FTC about the concerns particularly since the recent fatalities. She also noted she was part of Frome speed watch, and had been in touch with police, whose speed enforcement unit would be in place on the bridge between Commerce Park and Oldford very soon and regularly thereafter. She was also attending a meeting in October with speed enforcement and the police to talk about all traffic safety issues in Frome and was hoping there would be action taken after the meeting. Anita had raised the question of a roundabout or traffic lights at the junction of A361 and A362 and was told a roundabout was not possible because of the railway line. Martin Dimery also noted that SC had recorded the number of accidents there and had agreed something should be done but not sure what yet. Adam said it was not necessarily about speed, it was more about the layout of the junction and the dangers of merging onto the road.</p> <p>Fiona Barrows raised concern about the publicised SC budget deficit and asked if there was a way Cllrs could be kept informed of what was happening. Adam Boyden noted Cllrs were given monthly updates on finances, no published plan currently but Cllrs and officers were working really hard to minimise cuts to services. The financial situation was still being looked at as the audits from the previous district councils had still not been signed off. Philip asked that the Somerset Cllrs keep FTC updated.</p> <p>Mark thanked Dawn for her report. He asked in the report Dawn had referred to Berkley School and the fact that Cllr Tessa Munt indicated there might no longer be a need for a new school site. He asked whether a new school was now "dead in the water." Dawn noted that Tessa had said that because the school was always full there wasn't a current need. She was only able to go with the statistics in front of her. Dawn explained she was asking for an official response to say a new first school would not be built at Edmund Park. However, the education department wanted to keep the option open because there might be a need in future. The stumbling block at Edmund Park was that the s106 budget was allocated for a <i>first</i> school, there could be more options if it was just a school. She was very keen for a decision so the s106 money was not lost.</p> <p>Adam Boyden noted there was a SC scrutiny committee meeting on Wednesday 13th September the possibility of a two tier education system in Frome was on the agenda. Adam asked if there was any actions on the local community walking and</p>	
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	<p>infrastructure plan (LCWIP) and any extension to a 20mph zone? Fiona Barrows noted there was recommendations within the plan to extend these zones in some places in Frome. Paul Wynne also noted that Nikki Brain was investigating if it was possible to implement 20mph zones based on the recommendations in the LCWIP. FTC could then be sure anything implemented was evidence based.</p> <p>There was a brief discussion on speed cameras and the possibility of more options for their use in Frome. Anita Collier noted that the police require evidence of why they are needed and requested that this is forwarded to her. She also noted that FTC had received a grant to purchase (hopefully) number recognition cameras.</p>	
<p>2023/70/FC</p>	<p>3. For information - Update on programme to protect Badger's Hill stadium as a community asset and next steps</p> <p>Lisa Merryweather and Peter Wheelhouse gave a summary of the report.</p> <p>Anita Collier asked about the plans for refurbishing the kitchens at the Football Clubhouse. Peter explained that in the next few weeks there would be repairs to hot water facilities meaning the kitchen would be back in operation.</p> <p>Martin Dimery if solar panels had been considered. Peter confirmed the architect was considering this. He did note there was already solar panels on the stands and FRECO had confirmed that they were not currently being used to their full capacity. Peter expected that the CBS would be considering other sources of renewable energy generation where the budget would allow.</p> <p>Adam Boyden asked Peter how FTC funded the project. Sarah Williams confirmed that the majority of the funding by FTC to date was from the sale of land at Saxonvale with the reminder from the general reserve. Peter confirmed that subject to some outstanding legal questions, an additional £500k has been confirmed from the Community Ownership Fund and Football Foundation for restoration works.</p> <p>In reply to a question from Adam Boyden, Peter noted that the project would bring this £500k into the town and Lisa added that the planned wider community benefit of making the asset available to the community as a whole as the project developed will be substantial.</p>	

	<p>Lisa outlined the next steps which included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FTCBS building its team • Engaging the community • November AGM and membership offer, especially beyond the football community • Helping to secure the potential of the stadium for the community • Challenges that may be faced and FTC’s role <p>Andy Jones thanked all those that had worked so hard on the project to secure the community asset as well as bringing £500k to the community. He also noted that True Speed had offered to connect a community space for free with fibre broadband. Peter explained he had put the CBS and True Speed in touch, but he wasn’t sure of the outcome. A member of the public connected with True Speed said he would ask the CEO about this.</p> <p>Fiona Barrows asked if there was a deadline to spend the grant funding. Lisa explained there was of 12 months from the date of issue, a complication was that the funding had not been released yet because of legals. They had pushed back on the deadline. In the meantime the CBS had engaged an architect to stick to the timeline but also to challenge it. Fiona also asked about a Cllr representative on the CBS. Lisa explained Mel Usher had volunteered for the role. Lisa went on to explain there were other conditions on the CBS to ensure other members of the community would be represented too.</p> <p>Philip Goodwin, Vice Chair of the CBS, thanked FTC for all their help. He noted that all members of the CBS were all volunteers so the partnership with FTC had been really important. He highlighted that all the benefit of grants and facilities were to the benefit of Frome. Philip noted the lease with FTC was for 25 years and a long term sustainable business model was needed where income equates to expenditure and that all surpluses could be investment into the site. They were expecting membership of the CBS to grow and that it would grow faster as the project was seen to be successful. They were also looking at continuing to change the culture of the football club towards one that is much more diverse and inclusive , where it was not just about the football first team but about the community as whole. The issue of Frome Town Holdings "golden share" was taking time to resolve but Philip was confident that it would be.</p> <p>Carla Collenette asked Philip who did they envisage using the site within the context of diversity and inclusion and how were they going to ensure it was not just for the first men’s team?</p>	
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	<p>Philip explained it was early days, the good intent was there but not always the understanding. He noted investment into the presentation of the site would help welcome a broader range of people. They were trying to make sure there was enough revenue to help open up the building for the community to use far more often. Another option was to make it another entertainment space in the town. Lisa also noted that it was important to make the site more welcoming to the people who live close by.</p> <p>Martin Dimery asked how many times would the pitch be used in the week? Philip explained that it was likely to be a maximum of 3 – 4 times a week. A plastic pitch could be moved more often but that was unaffordable at the moment.</p> <p>It was confirmed the date of the AGM would be 30 November 2023 and that the CBS membership would be ongoing.</p>	
<p>2023/71/FC</p>	<p>4. For decision – new arrangements for the community development team and decide the recruitment of two engagement officers Paul Wynne provided a summary of the report.</p> <p>Fiona Barrows felt the talking about the community development team was confusing when compared with the various programmes in the Council Plan. Paul explained the current staff structure was interpreted to fit with the programmes in the Council Plan. However, when he referred to teams he accepted that he was referring to people and their line managers. Fiona said the new structure of the budget was hard for members of the public to understand. Paul agreed to explore how the council's work and how its staff are allocated might be improved and bring it back to council.</p> <p>Hannah Stopford explained who the members of the Community Team currently are and then introduced the areas of the work programme she and Nikki Cox, Partnership Lead, were working on.</p> <p>Hannah highlighted projects for Autumn/Winter 2023, Spring/Summer 2024 and Autumn/Winter 2024.</p> <p>Lisa Merryweather asked Hannah whether there would be capacity in the new posts to better inform staff and Cllrs about how identifying community need. Hannah said there would be and that various methods would be used to engage with as many as possible including, primarily, being out and about on the ground talking to people.</p>	<p>PWy</p>

	<p>The recommendation was to note the report and delegate to the Town Clerk and the Engagement Lead the recruitment of two 0.8 FTE permanent engagement officers.</p> <p>Proposed by Anne Hills, seconded by Anita Collier, agreed unanimously.</p>	<p>PWy</p>
<p>2023/72/FC</p>	<p>5. A verbal update on the possibility if a new Neighbourhood Plan from Cllr Steve Tanner</p> <p>Steve explained that the current Neighbourhood Plan was one of the first in the parish sector but was now nearly 10 years old. It sits beneath the local plan and was a formal policy. Therefore it would be considered in the planning process. There was an argument that parts of the plan need to be updated. Some had already begun such as housing, open spaces and the town centre. There was no sustainability section or community wellbeing in the current plan.</p> <p>Steve explained it would be a long piece of work of around 18 months or longer. All policies need to be backed up by evidence comprising robust data and significant engagement. Some things already exist such as LCWIP, Play strategy etc. Steve noted that there were well respected consultants that could be employed to help assist in the update. He listed various pros and cons of carrying out an update.</p> <p>Steve said the intention was to let Cllrs know there were discussions happening and a report would probably come to the next council meeting with more detail on costs, grant available and the work required alongside recommendations.</p> <p>There was a brief discussion of the importance of being aspirational and of carrying out quality community engagement.</p>	<p>ST/JL</p>
<p>2023/73/FC</p>	<p>6. For decision – approving a new budget layout, disposal of assets and appointment of internal auditors</p> <p>Sarah Williams gave a summary of the report.</p> <p>There was a discussion about how the public works loan board loans would be presented in the future. Sarah said she would work on this.</p> <p>The recommendations were:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Approve the new layout of the 2023-24 budget with no change to the overall budget figures 	<p>SW</p>

	<p>Proposed by Andy Jones, seconded by Carla Collenette, majority. Fiona Barrows was against.</p> <p>2. Approve the disposal of Goupil Electric Vehicle G3 and two laptops</p> <p>Proposed by Steve Tanner, seconded by Mark Dorrington, agreed unanimously.</p> <p>3. Approve the appointment of Fair Account for Frome Town Council's Internal Auditors for 2023/24</p> <p>Proposed by Andy Jones, seconded by Anita Collier, agreed unanimously.</p>	<p>SW</p>
<p>2023/74/FC</p>	<p>The next meeting will be at 7pm on Wednesday 4 October 2023, Frome Town Hall and Zoom</p>	

The Chair closed the meeting at 8.36pm