

Minutes of the Annual meeting of Frome Town Council

Wednesday 15 May 2024, 7pm  
Frome Town Hall and Zoom

**Present:**

In the Town Hall: Tracey Ashford, Fiona Barrows, Sara Butler, Philip Campagna, Anita Collier, Mark Dorrington, Andy Jones, Polly Lamb, Lisa Merryweather, Ben Still, Steve Tanner

**In attendance:**

Bob Ashford (Frome Neighbourhood Parking Group), Martin Dimery (SC Cllr), Adam Boyden (SC Cllr, online), Paul Wynne (Town Clerk), Sarah Williams (Business Manager), Lucy McMahon (Lead Marketing and Communications Officer), Becca Evans (Business Administrator), 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/3yVwlSC>

Minute Ref	Agenda Item	Action
2024/34/FC	<p>The meeting started at 7pm</p> <p>Philip thanked staff, Cllrs and residents of Frome for making his year as Mayor so special. He presented both Laura Flaherty and Lucy McMahon with a bouquet of flowers each for their help with managing his diary and writing the Mayor's column.</p> <p><b>1. Election of Mayor and Deputy Mayor</b></p> <p>Sara Butler proposed Andy Jones as Mayor of Frome 2024/25, seconded by Fiona Barrows, agreed unanimously.</p> <p>Andy Jones took the Chair and signed the declaration of acceptance of office.</p> <p>Andy Jones noted there was not one person who was able to take on the Deputy Mayor's role. Cllrs would step in when required.</p> <p>Andy thanked Philip and said he had done wonders for the town, most notably with the bus service.</p>	
2024/35/FC	<p><b>2. A short presentation from Frome Neighbourhood Parking Group</b></p>	

	<p>Bob Ashford gave a brief presentation of behalf of the residents parking group. He detailed the group’s objection to the residents parking scheme along Weymouth Road and the negative impact it has had. He also explained their frustrations around their interactions with Somerset Council and the Parking Officer as well as the ineffective consultations. Bob asked for FTC’s help to request a review of the scheme with Somerset Council.</p>	
<p>2024/36/FC</p>	<p><b>3a. Apologies for absence</b>          Lisa Merryweather proposed to accept apologies from Nick Dove, Anne Hills, Ben Still, Mel Usher, Max Wide and Andy Wrintmore and from Carla Collenette who attended online, seconded by Anita Collier, agreed unanimously.</p> <p>Sara Butler left the meeting at 7.35pm</p> <p><b>3b. Declaration of members’ interests</b>          None was received.</p> <p><b>3c. Minutes from the last meeting on 17 April 2024</b>          The minutes of the Frome Town Council meeting held on 17 April 2024 were approved as a true record of the meeting and signed by the Chair.</p> <p>Proposed by Philip Campagna, seconded by Mark Dorrington, agreed by majority. Fiona Barrow abstained.</p>	
<p>2024/37/FC</p>	<p><b>4. Questions from public and Cllrs</b>          Lenka Grimes confirmed the SC access point would be leaving the library at the end of June. She and Nikki Cox were looking into possible solutions including training some FTC staff with referrals to the food bank.</p> <p>Steve Tanner noted there had been grass strimming in various parts of town owned by SC, even though it was ‘no mow May.’          Martin Dimery said he would find out why.</p> <p>Steve asked if there was a way for FTC to work with SC to encourage the owners of the vacant site at Vallis Road to either develop it or sell it. Jane Llewellyn explained that it was likely the current owners had land-banked the site with no current intention of developing it. Martin Dimery offered to arrange a meeting to discuss options.</p> <p>Anita Collier asked what the process was for buildings that had been left empty. Jane explained that SC had an officer who was</p>	<p>MD</p> <p>MD</p>

	<p>responsible for a register of empty homes. She asked Anita to send her the details to pass onto SC.</p> <p>Martin Dimery noted the Selwood Garden Community planning application would be decided at the next SC planning meeting. He also noted that bids were in for the land at Saxonvale, he was concerned the process had been handled by a contractor rather than SC, he believed Cllrs would receive a report on the outcome in the Autumn.</p> <p>Martin also noted that Ashen Wood Nature Reserve would be preserved, meaning, legally, the quarry couldn't use it as a rubbish dump, also the quarry at West Down will go ahead.</p>	AC
2024/38/FC	<p>5. For decision - Adoption of Standing Orders and the General Power of Competence Cllrs noted the report.</p> <p>The recommendations were:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Approve the Standing Orders at <a href="#">Appendix 5.1</a></li> <li>2. Confirm that the eligibility criteria for utilising the power of general competence are met.</li> </ol> <p>Proposed by Lisa Merryweather, seconded by Fiona Barrows, agreed unanimously.</p>	
2024/39/FC	<p>6. For decision - Calendar of meetings 2024/25 starting May 2024 Cllrs noted the report.</p> <p>The recommendation was to reapprove the calendar of meetings for 2024/25.</p> <p>Proposed by Anita Collier, seconded by Fiona Barrows, agreed unanimously.</p>	
2024/40/FC	<p>7. For decision – Appointing the Leader and Deputy Leader of the Council, the membership and chairs of the Planning, Oversight and Grants Committees Cllrs noted the report.</p> <p>The recommendations were:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Election of the Leader and Deputy Leader of the Council Anita Collier proposed Steve Tanner as Leader and Lisa Merryweather as Deputy Leader, seconded by Polly Lamb, agreed unanimously.</li> </ol>	

	<p><b>2. Membership of the Planning Committee</b>                  The proposed membership was as follows:                  Steve Tanner (Chair)                  Fiona Barrows                  Philip Campagna                  Mark Dorrington                  Andy Jones                  Polly Lamb                  Lisa Merryweather</p> <p>Steve Tanner proposed to add Lisa Merryweather to the Planning Committee, seconded by Fiona Barrows, agreed unanimously.</p> <p><b>3. Membership of the Oversight Committee</b>                  The proposed membership was as follows:                  Mark Dorrington (Chair)                  Fiona Barrows                  Nick Dove                  Anne Hills                  Andy Jones                  Ben Still                  Steve Tanner                  Mel Usher</p> <p><b>4. Membership of the Grants Committee</b>                  The proposed membership was as follow:                  Philip Campagna                  Anita Collier                  Anne Hills                  Andy Jones, Mayor (Chair)                  Lisa Merryweather                  Steve Tanner                  Andy Wrintmore</p> <p>Lisa Merryweather proposed to accept the membership of the Planning, Oversight and Grants Committees, seconded by Polly Lamb, agreed unanimously.</p>	
<p>2024/41/FC</p>	<p><b>8. For decision – Changes to Financial Regulations</b>                  Sarah Williams gave a summary of the report.</p> <p>The recommendation was to approve the proposed changes to the Financial Regulations 2024.</p>	

	Proposed by Steve Tanner, seconded by Lisa Merryweather, agreed unanimously.	
2024/42/FC	<p>9. a For decision - Year End Financial reports to March 2024, the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) 2023/24 and proposed Earmarked Reserves at 1/4/24</p> <p>A summary of the report was given by Sarah Williams.</p> <p>Steve Tanner thanked Sarah for all her hard work, particularly in a tough year. Sarah also thanked Hannah Watts for her exemplary book keeping.</p> <p>The recommendation was:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Instruct the Chair and the Clerk to sign on Cllrs' behalf that they agree all the governance statements in Section 1 of the Annual Governance Statement 2023/24 and for it to be recorded as a minute reference.</li> </ol> <p>Proposed by Lisa Merryweather, seconded by Philip Campagna, agreed unanimously.</p>	
2024/43/FC	<p>9. b For decision - Year End Financial reports to March 2024, the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) 2023/24 and proposed Earmarked Reserves at 1/4/24</p> <p>The recommendations were:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. Note that the Responsible Finance Officer has certified that the accounting statements fairly represent the financial position of Frome Town Council.</li> <li>3. Instruct the Chair and the RFO to sign on Cllrs' behalf that they have approved the accounting statements. (2. and 3. to be recorded as separate minute references)</li> </ol> <p>Propose by Lisa Merryweather, seconded by Anita Collier, agreed unanimously.</p>	
2024/44/FC	<p>9. c For decision - Year End Financial reports to March 2024, the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) 2023/24 and proposed Earmarked Reserves at 1/4/24</p> <p>The recommendations were:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4. Approve the exercise of public rights dates for 2024</li> <li>5. Approve the revised Earmarked Reserves for the start of the financial year</li> <li>6. Approve the increase in the minimum prudent General Reserve from £180k to £350k</li> <li>7. Note the amount in the General Reserve at the start of the financial year</li> </ol>	

	<p>8. Approve the Internal Auditor’s reports Oct 23 – Jan 24 and Feb 24 – Mar 24 as included in Appendix 9.4</p> <p>Proposed by Steve Tanner, seconded by Lisa Merryweather, agreed unanimously.</p>	
<p>2024/45/FC</p>	<p>Vote on confidential session</p> <p>The proposal was for this item on staff matters be held in confidential session, therefore members of the public and press were asked to leave.</p> <p>Proposed by Mark Dorrington, seconded by Lisa Merryweather, agreed unanimously.</p>	
<p>2024/46/FC</p>	<p>10. a Staff matters</p> <p>Cllrs reviewed the recommendations of the staff evaluation project that followed the standard NALC evaluation process and was carried out by South West Councils. This process comprised an evaluation of each post based on the current job description and a job evaluation questionnaire completed by each member of staff and checked by their manager. Cllrs Dorrington, Merryweather and Tanner had previously been delegated to work with the Town Clerk and the Business Manager to oversee the process.</p> <p>Sarah Williams noted there was sufficient budget to implement the recommendations.</p> <p>The recommendations were:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Agree the proposed grading structure detailed in the confidential report</li> <li>2. Agree that all current posts be placed in the proposed grading structure</li> <li>3. Agree the proposed two year pay protection policy so that no post holder receives a pay cut.</li> </ol> <p>Proposed by Lisa Merryweather, seconded by Anita Collier, agreed unanimously.</p>	
<p>2024/47/FC</p>	<p>11. b Staff Matters</p> <p>Cllrs agreed the recommendation to make the posts of Planning and Development Officer and Town Centre Ranger permanent.</p> <p>Proposed Anita Collier, seconded by Polly Lamb, agreed unanimously.</p>	

2024/48/FC	The next meeting will be at 7pm on Wednesday 12 June 2024, Frome Town Hall and Zoom	
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The chair closed the meeting at: 8.11pm

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