

Minutes of a meeting of the Oversight Committee

Wednesday 11 December 2024, 7pm
Frome Town Hall and Zoom

Present:

In the Town Hall: Fiona Barrows, Mark Dorrington (Chair), Nick Dove, Anne Hills, Andy Jones, Steve Tanner

In attendance:

Tom Spencer (Terrestrial), Paul Wynne (Town Clerk), Sarah Williams (Business Manager), Jane Llewellyn (Planning and Development Manager), Nikki Cox (Partnership Lead), Rob Holden (Environment Manager)

0 members of the public was in attendance at Frome Town Hall
1 member of the public was in attendance on Zoom

To watch the discussion in full visit:

www.youtube.com/watch?v=DfgRAzocyDU&list=PLVZ2uDe2S2pJvhMkVOVZ9gSJ_XoP4APCu&index=6

Minute Ref	Agenda Item	Action
2024/48/OS	<p>The meeting started at 7pm</p> <p>1a. Apologies for absence Steve Tanner proposed to accept apologies from Ben Still, seconded by Nick Dove, agreed unanimously.</p> <p>1b. Declaration of members' interests None was received.</p> <p>1c. Minutes from the last meeting on 23 October 2024 The minutes of the Oversight Committee meeting held on 23 October 2024 were approved as a true record of the meeting and signed by the Chair.</p> <p>Amend minutes to add Nick Dove's apologies for absence.</p> <p>Proposed by Anne Hills, seconded by Nick Dove, agreed by unanimously.</p>	
2024/49/OS	<p>2. Questions and comments</p> <p>Lenka Grimes, Fair Frome, raised concerns about the housing emergency in Frome, noting a year-and-a-half wait for social housing and a 40% increase in rough sleeping. Lenka described the impact on families being evicted, made homeless and placed in temporary accommodation with no cooking facilities. There was a discussion about the housing crisis.</p>	

	<p>Jane Llewellyn mentioned that the local plan engagement included flagging Airbnb as an issue.</p> <p>Mark Dorrington asked Paul Wynne to Somerset Council and the MP to highlight the need for action over the Housing Crisis and to ask for an exploration of restrictions on second homes.</p> <p>Nikki Cox introduced Tom Spencer, the director of Terrestrial Arts, who discussed their work in community arts. Terrestrial hosted the Town Hall takeover in November which encouraged families to explore the Town Hall with the offer of free creative activities. Tom shared photos and details of their events aimed at bringing families into a civic building and promoting the FIND directory. Tom highlighted the positive impact of these events on community engagement and the creation of new relationships between local groups and artists.</p>	<p>PWy</p>
<p>2024/50/OS</p>	<p>3. For information - Review of Nurture Open Spaces Work Programme</p> <p>Rob Holden provided a quarterly update on open spaces projects.</p> <p>Highlighted projects included the restoration of the Roundhouse, repair of a dangerous wall above Welshmill play area, and the replacement of rotting wood in play structures. The use of Robinia wood for new structures was discussed, Rob noted the expectation is it would last at least 15 years.</p> <p>Rob also provided updates on tree planting and the work of the Wild About Trees project, numerous community engagement work at, for example, Broadway Community Garden, Egford Play area and Welshmill Woods, safety assessments, and the installation of new lights in the town centre. In the town centre there had been further improvements including planters, street sweeping, and weed management. Rob highlighted the challenges of maintaining a consistent level of weed clearance across the town centre. The importance of local businesses taking an active role in maintaining the town centre was emphasised.</p> <p>Also included in Rob's update was the installation of new cross Christmas street lights and the funding of CCTV by FTC.</p>	
<p>2024/51/OS</p>	<p>4. For decision – updates to the Staff Handbook</p> <p>Sarah Williams provided a brief overview of the report.</p> <p>The policies at the appendices that had been updated were on Grievance, Absence Management and Disciplinary Procedure.</p> <p>Andy Jones suggested including a record of meetings during the grievance procedure in the Grievance Policy in the staff handbook.</p>	

	<p>The recommendations were:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Approve the changes to the policies as shown in the appendices 2. Delegate to the Executive Assistant to the Town Clerk and Mayor to update the Staff Handbook with the new policies and ensure all employees have an up to date copy <p>Proposed by Mark Dorrington, seconded by Andy Jones, agreed by majority.</p>	LF
2024/52/OS	<p>5. For Information – Planning & Development Officer Post</p> <p>Jane Llewellyn provided an update on the recruitment process for the Planning and Development Officer position, with a closing date for applications set for 13 January 2025.</p> <p>Fiona Barrows emphasised the importance of embedding retrofit work into the planning process and ensuring that contributions from section 106 agreements were spent as intended.</p>	
2024/53/OS	<p>6. A verbal update on safeguarding matters at FTC</p> <p>Nikki Cox noted that 33 community organisations came to the safeguarding training that Bob Ashford put on as part of FTC’s wider support. Recently there had been two safeguarding issues that had happened in the Hub and in the Town Hall that had been either escalated or shared with partner organisations. Nikki and Lenka, Fair Frome, were considering a fortnightly meeting in order to make that each had an awareness of vulnerable people in the community.</p>	
2024/54/OS	<p>The next meeting will be at 7pm on Wednesday 29 January 2025, Frome Town Hall and Zoom</p>	

The Chair closed the meeting at pm