

Agenda Item 7

For information - Update on Marketing and Communications work programme

Author: Rachel Griffin, Marketing & Communications Manager, Lucy McMahon, Lead Marketing and Communication Officer and Laura Hales, Marketing and Communications Officer

Summary

This report is an update of the Marketing and Communications teams' area of work. The report also identifies the scope of what the team does, a look forward to the year ahead. It also revisits the current team structure.

Aims and objectives

The aim of the Marketing and Communications team is:

- To enhance the public understanding of the council's work and encourage participation from residents
- To ensure the communication of the council's work is as inclusive and accessible as possible, timely, accurate and gives information about our projects to the community;
- To collect insights and feedback, and interpret them
- To enhance the council's and the town's public image and reputation.

We will achieve these through positive and meaningful communication both in digital format in person, in print and by gaining coverage for council-related projects on regional radio and TV. In addition, we work with colleagues across FTC, adding value by producing coordinated communications for all council projects.

Our workstreams can be divided into three strands:

- **The Town Hall**, promoting and supporting the events that happen in it and ensuring good occupation rates. These stats will be reported on when we next report on the Town Hall.
- **Discover Frome**, which aims to get residents and visitors into Frome, and which also segues with our visitor offer, supporting our independent shops, active travel, and the arts.

Whilst this area of work sits under the town centre work programme it is useful and therefore not reflected in the table below it is useful to look at the website traction. The Discover Frome website has significant footfall and in the 12 months to 12th March 2025 had 525,655 page views from 208,977 active users, weighted towards 'What's On' for obvious reasons. Due to Google's switch from Universal Analytics to GA4 in July 2023, we don't have complete data for the same dates in 2023/24, but the figure of 335,491 views in the nine months of data available shows that the site is thriving, well used and growing – a vital source of information for our residents. It's an invaluable shop window for all events in Frome, not least the council's own.

Despite its success, the Discover Frome site is dated and much in need of its forthcoming relaunch, to capitalise further on its evident value to residents and visitors.

It serves as a snapshot of the ways the comms team work to reach as broad a cross-section of the town as possible that the Discover Frome model operates as a website, via two busy social media channels and face-to-face via the information point in the library.

- Delivering and promoting projects identified in the Town Plan that support our residents and highlight the work of Frome Town Council.

To ensure we reach everyone, we employ multiple communications channels, aiming to talk to people in the spaces where they are most comfortable and in the way they choose to receive information; whether in person, in print or online. We use:

Press releases

Unlike our digital platforms, there's no data to quantify how many people read our articles in an 'analogue' way, but the Frome Times alone has a circulation of 13,700 copies and our articles are frequently picked up by other newspapers. The traction our press releases receive in their online form and the availability/visibility of the Frome Times in print suggest that press releases remain an invaluable tool for PR and information sharing, primarily our 'offline' audience but in reality a much larger section of the community.

Websites

Our websites are well used, and we constantly evaluate the content, user-friendliness, and ensure there are regular updates of content, working with colleagues across FTC and with community stakeholders.

The 9th most visited page in 2024/25 was the landing page for Safer School Streets, with 2,630 page views in 2024/25. This is partly a reflection of the relatively high volume of press activity around the scheme, pointing at this page, and demonstrates that people visit the site for up-to-date information.

Social media

The Facebook and Instagram accounts for FTC and Discover Frome show a steady growth in followers. The Meta algorithm is complex and changeable and no longer hyperlocal, so we have recently conducted a raft of A/B testing and trialled greater use of Instagram Stories and video content, in line with industry recommendations, with some promising results.

Newsletters

Our newsletters send targeted information to sub-sections of our audience and perform extremely well, with high open and click through rates and low unsubscribe rates.

Frome Matters provides a combined record of press content for the month and provides an update on current and forthcoming events.

The Community Groups newsletter is used chiefly by the Resilience and Engagement teams, via the comms team, to communicate with their network of stakeholders in Frome's community groups and voluntary organisations. It's a useful tool for promoting networking,

and information sharing and the well-attended free lunches reflect the high engagement level with the newsletter.

The Business Updates newsletter enables the same kind of useful information sharing with the business community in Frome. An example of the effectiveness of the newsletter is a new 'FBI' Frome Business Innovators event in early March, which sold out its first session after being advertised via the newsletter and an FTC press release and has almost sold out its next instalment.

TicketTailor

We use TicketTailor to manage free and paid-for bookings for council events and also as part of support for others' events, such as Frome Walking Festival, or Great Big Green Week. It enables us to track trends of what is happening and working well across the town and gather data from people we know to be engaged already, or open to engagement.

Visual media

We're fortunate to have a skilled designer in the comms team in Miles, immersed in the FTC brand and with longstanding knowledge and understanding of the various strands of work. Miles created many pieces of collateral in 2024/25, including 72 posters, graphics, leaflets and booklets, video content, signage and more.

Community noticeboards

Our team of volunteer noticeboard ambassadors look after the network of 27 noticeboards. This is a popular and well-used publicity option for event and activity providers of all sizes and ensures posters for FTC events are visible in all areas of Frome.

Face to face

Our Discover Frome volunteers staff the information point in Frome Library, providing a range of information for residents and visitors to Frome. And our reception team in the Town Hall provide a similar service too.

Other digital platforms

These include tools for project-specific communications and feedback where appropriate including Your Priorities, Commonplace, YouTube and SurveyMonkey.

To ensure anyone can access meetings of the Town Council and the Oversight, Planning and Grants Committees, we livestream on YouTube and residents are welcome to attend in person or online via Zoom, with recordings available to view after the event. Meeting attendance from the public remains lower than desired and it's an ongoing piece of work to increase engagement. Breaking down barriers to access is an important step in this direction.

Events, activities, and meetings

These fall into three broad categories, requiring varying degrees of staff time:

1. FTC events and semi-autonomous events

As well as hosting FTC events such as the 50th anniversary celebration, hustings and the annual Christmas event, we collaborate with many community groups and

activity providers to amplify and market their events. These include the Remembrance Day ceremony, the Weylands Wassail, the recent 'Live for Under Fives' event and the Donate IT tech amnesty. The Comms team maintain a high level of involvement with these events, creating posters and collateral, writing press releases and social media content, producing the risk assessment and helping to staff and run the event on the day.

FTC events also include monthly council meetings, meetings of other committees and the annual town meeting, which the comms team advertise through our digital channels, and in the case of the Annual Town Meeting, with posters, a press release and a short film reviewing the Mayor's year.

2. Promoting town events

There are many other instances where we aren't directly involved in the running or logistics of the event, but nevertheless we use our communications channels and reach to promote events such as the Kindness Festival and Frome Festival, by creating and sharing social media content and providing a one-stop-shop for information about all town events on Discover Frome.

Great Big Green Week

In the case of the national Great Big Green Week event, we encourage and facilitate a programme of local events, producing a printed leaflet and digital what's on guide, plus press and social media. We also contribute our own events. In 2024 we supported just under 40 events including screenings, nature-based mindfulness, clothes swaps, and tree walks.

3. Supporting the wider team's activities and events/canvassing opinion

Green and Healthy Frome

Since 2022, we've worked with partners Edventure and Frome Medical Practice on Green and Healthy Frome, supporting the GHF team at FTC in promoting Healthy Homes and the retrofit project and Cycle Together. We've also helped to increase the reach of the partners' project strands through our platforms and collaborated on quarterly reporting on website and social media metrics specific to Green and Healthy Frome.

Safer School Streets

We've supported the Safer School Streets project and helped the project officer design and implement the comms for the extensive works required, and with promoting active travel more generally through annual events like Big Walk and Wheel. This work continues in the coming weeks with the launch of the project evaluation process and a series of pop-up consultations.

Building a Picture of our Town/Old Showfield engagement/Victoria Park and Mary Bailly Engagement

It's a cornerstone of FTC policy to ask residents for their opinion and to act on what they tell us. The comms team support many engagement activities; in 2024/25 the largest was the town-wide survey 'Building a Picture of our Town'. Led by the Engagement team, the project saw us assist with pop-up events across town and promote a survey designed by Locality through all our channels, to ensure as broad an uptake as possible. Once the data was in,

including extensive census data gathered by Locality, Rachel and Miles created a series of data 'dashboards' to display the data in an engaging and user-friendly way, which were used in a series of staff, councillor and public-facing events and stand as a visual record of the project.

Marketing and Communications team – as at March 2025

Below is the Marketing and Communications team - who does what and where their current project focus is:

Rachel Griffin – Marketing & Communications Manager (full time)

- Strategic direction for Marketing and Communications, brand guardian, PR, and insight
- Town Hall and events
- Discover Frome project.

Currently working on launch of new Discover Frome website and event planning for the year ahead, Markets and a reimagined Christmas event.

Lucy McMahon – Lead Marketing and Communications Officer (full time)

- Press
- Events
- FTC website

Currently looking at updating brand guidelines, delivering the next Skate Jam and skate park engagement event, supporting School Streets final tranche of engagement and feedback, moving onto 'Who reads what?' work.

Laura Hales - Marketing and Communications Officer (22.5hrs)

- Social media
- Newsletters
- Town Hall Marketing

Laura has been leading on the work to bring the Westway mural together. Next on her list will be the collaboration to produce an updated What does Frome Town Council do? leaflet and online resource.

Miles Macey –Marketing and Communications Assistant (20hrs)

- Artworking
- Ticketing
- Digital assets

Currently working on new templates for the parks and open spaces management plans, a new series of signs to Welcome people to our parks and open spaces and on continuing engagement resources for the skate park conversations. Looking forward, work to support a new digital engagement platform.

Nykki Mehta – Events Administrator (29.5hrs)

- Bookings both in the Town Hall & parks and open spaces
- Admin and logistical support for events
- Rotas for support stewards

Currently working on road closures for community events and our large-scale events and the launch of the markets.

Amber Stone –Marketing and Tourism Assistant (full time)

- Discover Frome website and social media
- Community groups newsletters
- Updates for FIND

Currently working on the new Discover Frome website updates and features and FIND updates. Amber is also supporting the conversations between traders of Cheap Street and Palmer Street, to support the town centre area of work. Amber will support the production of new Discover Frome maps as Ranger Mike restores them.

Tricia Mugridge – Discover Frome Information Point Volunteer Coordinator (5hrs)

Project based to support the Discover Frome Information Point.

Bex Badenhorst – Interim Market Coordinator

Freelance contract until 31 May to support the set up and delivery of Frome weekly markets.

Work Programme review updated table

The objectives for this area of work are defined in the 2024-25 Work Programme below

2024/25			
Objectives	Action	Update	RAG rating
Develop a strategic programme of Marketing and Communications to include community projects, marketing the town and the Town Hall	Comms & marketing strategy	Reviewed yearly it was last reviewed at Oversight on 24 April 2024 Strategy Review - we need to do a piece of work - 'Who reads what' before we do our next review to better inform the strategy that underpins this area of work, and make sure that our activities are fit for purpose however current evidence supports our current planning.	
	Deliver timely pr for the purposes of informing and engaging the town	<p>Last year we delivered around 10-12 press releases per fortnight ranging in subjects from across the entire team as well as our own work programme supporting activities and events, campaigns, and initiatives. Delivered to follow Frome Times' cycle, many stories are picked up by local and regional press, with a good rate of engagement with radio and TV via our broad-based distribution list.</p> <p>Content is then funnelled through our channels – from the website down and out through social, other online platforms, newsletters with engaging collateral reaching across the town in the form of leaflets and posters.</p> <p>All digital channels show steady growth however the algorithms have moved away from a hyper local focus meaning that it's even more important to use our other digital and non-digital channels. Our engagement figures from our web analytics however show a significant increase in web activity and dwell time showing that both websites are trusted sources of information.</p>	
Support and increase the range of information for	FTC Website+ digital tools - keep up to date and	We work hard to keep the Frome Town Council website up to date, ensuring it remains a valuable resource for residents, businesses, and visitors. Over the past 12 months, website views have increased significantly to 297,518, up from 223,249 between July 2023 and March 2024. The most visited pages continue to be the main Frome Town Council page,	

residents about Increase community based projects, activities, and services available, to encourage engagement and active participation.	accurate information	<p>along with sections providing community and business information, highlighting the demand for reliable local updates. The Jobs page also remains a popular destination, reflecting ongoing interest in employment opportunities in our organisation. With an average engagement time of 55 to 60 seconds across the site, visitors are staying to explore key content, whether checking council projects and initiatives, reading the latest news, or searching for local openings.</p> <p>Discover Frome, which we look at in detail in the Town Centre Update has smashed its own engagement figures last year with 525,655 views – 177% of the FTC site views</p>	
	Deliver and support events, meetings, and activities - including shaping, marketing, ticketing, and communicating	<p>Meetings and event plays a vital role across the work programme to engage the town in our work and therefore we spend a lot of time delivering and supporting a wide range of events, meetings, and activities across the town. From shaping event concepts to handling marketing, ticketing, and communication, we work to identify the right audience and ensure that the detail is in place to ensure everything runs smoothly. We partner where we can, working closely with community groups and organisers to provide promotional support, create engaging content, and manage digital and print marketing. Whether it's a major festival, a public meeting, or a local initiative, the team's expertise in branding, social media, press outreach, and event coordination helps maximise engagement and participation. At the end of this report there is a list of all the initiatives where we have supported the delivery of the event or meeting.</p>	
	Implement programme of digital communications utilising social media with measurable results	<p>We implement a programme of strategic social media content designed to point people to our PR and prompt the call to action. Followers on social media continue to steadily rise (about 25% of population for FTC Facebook). We have noted changes in social media use, fewer 'likes' but viewing and link clicks remain stable. Also noted more peer conversation balancing and fact checking.</p> <p>We are beginning to implement A/B testing to discover what content works best for our audience. So far results as expected with 'real' content out-performing animation or posters.</p>	

		<p>Social media snapshot – March 2025</p> <p>FTC Facebook followers: 6,965 (March 2024 6,455)</p> <p>FTC Insta followers: 3,774 (March 2024 3,467)</p> <p>DF Facebook followers: 3,564 (March 2024 3,283)</p> <p>DF Insta followers: 2,718 (March 2024 2,420)</p>	
	<p>Deliver a series of newsletters to support areas across the work programme, to include Frome Matters, Community groups and Business Update</p>	<p>Monthly Frome Matters newsletter (clerks update as was) has a consistent open rate of 58-60% and 4-6% click through rate - this far exceeds the estimated average in the UK of 18% opens and 0.9% clicks (Campaign Monitor).</p> <p>Business Update goes out on a as need requires basis and we often use subgroups of the email (circulation 1,082 as at March 2025) reliably in high 40% of open rates.</p> <p>We have reintroduced the Community groups newsletter to support the community teams' work (circulation 473). This has similar open rates to Frome Matters - between 50 & 60% and click rates (how many people move to the call to action) regularly exceed 8%, especially when there's a free lunch involved... There is power in the newsletter! And ours is a very engaged audience. Unsubscribe rates are very low for the same reason.</p> <p>For this reason we would like a significant increase in signups to the Newsletter's particularly Frome Matters, to ensure that everybody who encounters anyone at FTC gets offered the option of signing up to the newsletter. We are working on a plan to support this aspiration.</p>	
	<p>Summer placement to support the workload</p>	<p>Developing new talent and supporting young people is part of our corporate responsibility and has delivered fantastically for the team over the years. Amber Stone came to us via this route. However last year due to the team's workload and holidays for the first time in five years we didn't recruit a summer placement.</p>	

		Experience has taught us that we need to ensure that we are properly available to support the placement to ensure that we all have the most rewarding experience for all, so this year we have supported a number of work experience placements instead. We currently have a young person who has been coming every Monday morning under Laura Hales' tutelage and are gearing up to have another two-week work experience person in the Easter holidays. We will recruit for a six-week placement over the coming summer.	
	Support all projects to include school streets, GHF, town wide engagement, FIND, our parks and open spaces engagement, resilience programme and Football club and Town Centre initiatives	<p>This is the one line in our work programme that can sometimes feel out of reach, unplanned and entirely responsive and can mean that the workload seems vast sometimes. However we do all that we can to keep all FTC initiatives feeling buoyant and supported with good information and interesting collateral.</p> <p>FIND is a good case in point. It accounts for 10.1% of all activity and 13.8% of active users on the FTC website – 30,186 views in 2024/25 . As with any listings document or database it is only as good as the information and so we work hard to ensure that the listings are up to date. The 'Activities and Groups for 5 year olds' page is the best-performing FIND page and the 8th most visited on the FTC site. We are continuing to look for solutions to automate or for other tools to help groups and individuals to self update. We continue to explore with Somerset Connect a pilot for an updatable county-wide offer. This is ambitious and could be extraordinary, offering a single point of entry to update with information squirting out in many different places. However, this work has been in the pipeline for three years and has stalled at the county end due to the financial emergency. We are assured that it will remain a priority as they recruit into new posts.</p> <p>The Safer School Streets project is another good example - with the team delivering a package of support to include numerous letter drops, maps and posters at bus stops etc, numerous press releases and updating of the website, and support at meetings and engagement events. The Safer School Streets page was the 9th most visited page of the FTC website in 2024/25 – 2,630 views, and an above-average dwell time of 65 seconds. Worth all the time spent updating it!</p>	

		<p>Another notable example and now on its 3rd iteration is our Living well leaflet packed with content designed to point residents as sources of support. Originally designed as a cost of living support document many of the services now request the leaflet as a quick and simple way to signpost.</p> <p>Other initiatives that we have supported this year are stated in a list at the bottom pf this report.</p>	
	Recruit and support a team of noticeboard ambassadors (volunteers) to deliver information across the town	<p>We currently have 27 boards, across the town which are updated weekly by volunteer noticeboard ambassadors. An initiative that has been running for 7 years now, it is a very smooth operation with the only issue arises when businesses or things that don't meet the criteria are put up by individuals or when it rains, and all the posters come off the boards. We can also sometimes be frustrated due to the scheme's success when our posters don't stay up very long.</p> <p>Supporting events and managing noticeboards in this way can also help reduce fly posting. We are often asked by other towns how we service this project, or what it costs – but it is as simple as it looks and extremely effective!</p>	
	Create engaging print media and branding and collateral for projects as required	<p>Last year we made 72 posters to promote FTC's events and projects. Though most of the design work is done by Miles, the whole team has been equipped with the skills to create posters using the standard FTC templates and make updates when necessary.</p> <p>Posters are the tip of the iceberg – we have taken an adaptable approach to making engaging, accessible communications across many mediums and support the work of the wider team however is needed. This includes signage, programmes, videos, social media graphics, branding, and display collateral.</p> <p>Designing longer documents was a larger part of our work this year, including: the Frome Devotion Deal Prospectus; Frome Town Council Plan 2025-27; and new, extended versions</p>	

		<p>of our open space management plans. Due to the number of people involved in writing the documents, and the variety of elements they include, they can take a significant amount of time and go through many iterations. However, the time we have invested in creating these documents also means we have developed a template and cohesive style which will help streamline the design of similar projects in the future.</p> <p>The redesign of programmes for Great Big Green Week and Frome Walking Festival were also time investments that created reuseable templates and assets to streamline the process going forward. This has worked well for other annual projects such as updating the Living Well in Frome Community Guide – this year we gave the guide a new colour scheme and thoroughly checked and updated the information before distributing it to 13,000 household with the Frome Times.</p> <p>We also designed and installed a window display across 2 empty shops on Cheap Street showing the work of artists participating in Frome Open Art Trail. This display continues to brighten up the vacant windows and promote local artists. We are now turning our attention to</p>	
Support a programme of activity that enables people living and working in Frome to participate and engage in decision making	Support decision making through digital initiatives, voting drives etc.	<p>Our engagement activities last year used a multifaceted approach, using digital surveys, in-person engagement through pop-up and larger events, and going directly to key stakeholders where relevant.</p> <p>Key projects were: Building a Picture of Frome: working closely with the Community Development team, we supported this project with a digital survey and publicising pop-up engagement events. The broad scope of this project yielded valuable feedback for both FTC and other local organisations, with 973 people reached. We also created a series of data dashboards, and an event was held so that everyone could see and understand the data. The feedback gained from this engagement led to the new action “Invest in a digital platform to support participatory decision making” in our 2025-26 work programme.</p>	

		<p>Mary Baily and Victoria Park engagement: Through a digital survey, talking to people in the park and key stakeholders e.g. Longleat Court residents, and a Skate Jam event, we had over 330 responses which have informed the new management plans for these spaces. Another Skate Jam is planned to further engage young people and parents as part of working towards potential solutions for a new skate park as the current one reaches the end of its life.</p> <p>Old Showfield engagement: due to the size and layout of the Old Showfield, we worked closely with other teams to create an engagement plan that would reflect the diversity of features and visitors to the site. This involved splitting the site into 11 “zones” and planning engagement for each. Some key stakeholders were approached directly, 8 events were held in the Easter holidays targeting different audiences, and an online engagement delivered additional responses.</p> <p>Dog area engagement: Following the Old Showfield engagement, we created a survey and draft plan, supported with an on-site event, around a possible dog area at the Old Showfield which may have included a fenced dog socialisation/recall training area and casual, beginner-level agility equipment. Though there was some passionate support for the project, a majority of respondents were against or critical of the plans. Although some were disappointed that the project didn’t go ahead, the range of responses was a positive sign that our engagement efforts produce an accurate reflection of community feeling.</p>	
	Promote and support FTC meetings and digital engagement tools across the wider work programme.	<p>It is true to say we are less successful in this area where we have limited engagement at Council and oversight meetings beyond those who have come to talk about a particular agenda item or to ask a question. Key perhaps is the short notice given for agendas. This makes it difficult for residents to plan their attendance or engage meaningfully with the issues being discussed. As council papers are typically published only a week in advance, we often miss the opportunity to generate interest through the local press or social media. Without sufficient time for awareness-raising, the public may be unaware of key discussions or feel unprepared to contribute. By contrast, when we have the ability to promote meetings and events well in advance, engagement tends to be stronger, as people have time to absorb the issues, express interest, and make arrangements to attend.</p>	

		However the advance in live streaming has meant that all of our council meetings are now online, and people can join and watch along with us or watch at a later more convenient point. And they quite frequently do.	
	Hustings	The Frome hustings was a major success last year, with tickets selling out within hours and a waiting list forming quickly. This demonstrated that the town is strongly politically engaged and the need for careful planning. All candidates were invited, and the Cheese and Grain again proved an ideal venue. Tickets were managed online, allowing efficient reallocation, but demand outpaced promotion, leaving some unaware until it was too late. The debate was well-structured, with diverse audience questions, but future hustings may require a hybrid format with live-streaming to meet demand	
	Promotion of the Hub	<p>The development of the Hub over the last few years has meant that we actively promote it through our usual channels. Repositioning the Town Hall as a community hub has strengthened its focus on accessibility and community support, making it a flexible venue for everything from networking events and workshops to support services, ESOL lessons and drop-in sessions. By sharing success stories, user testimonials, and event highlights, we can ensure the Hub remains a well-used resource, fostering collaboration.</p> <p>The Welcome Hub operating alongside Citizens Advice and the Probation Service, creating a shared space for essential support services. The Pantry also links with other services to provide wrap-around support where it is needed most, and this too is marketed as part of the Hub offer.</p> <p>Within this framework, the Welcome Hub has been established to support displaced people, offering a space where they can find the help they need. Events such as Refugee Week provide an important platform for people to share their stories, connect with others, and access support, reinforcing the Town Hall's role as a centre for inclusivity and community wellbeing and inclusion.</p>	

Events & engagement activities to bring the community together, encourage participation and community cohesion	Enable community events in Parks and Open Spaces	<p>Over the past year, we have supported approximately 33 open space and outdoor events in our parks and green spaces since April 2024. These have included both community-led activities and events organised by Frome Town Council.</p> <p>Community groups have made great use of our spaces, with Avanti School holding weekly PE lessons and their annual sports day in Mary Baily Park. A variety of other activities have also taken place, including drumming workshops, yoga, pregnancy classes, and art groups. Larger events have been hosted by organisations such as Frome Festival, Frome Carnival Club, the Lions Club, local fundraising groups, the Rainbow Family Picnic, the Refugee Picnic, and the Big Summer Meet-Up. We continue to work closely with these groups to ensure safe and easy access to our open spaces.</p> <p>Frome Town Council has also hosted several key events in public spaces, including Great Big Green Week, the FTC 50th Birthday Celebration in the Park, and the Christmas Lantern Parade, among others.</p> <p>Since last March we have serviced 66 requests for community borrowing.</p>	
	Enable community to access Boyle Cross	Boyle Cross hosts a weekly flower stall and Panini van run by Critchill School, adding to the vibrancy of the space. A monthly Farmers' Market also takes place, alongside occasional stalls from organisations such as Healthy Homes, Frome Bike Project, and Rodenstock Opticians. Activity in this area is set to expand as we take on the management of the weekly markets, bringing more opportunities for local traders and enhancing the market offering in Frome	
	Work with Businesses to support a Town Centre shop local offer at Christmas	<p>The Christmas Advent Countdown 2024 celebrated the town's independent businesses by showcasing a diverse range of local retailers throughout December. The campaign grouped businesses by sector, making it easier for shoppers to explore different offerings—from artisan makers and boutiques to food specialists and experience-based gifts.</p> <p>By highlighting a new category each day, the campaign encouraged residents to shop locally, discover new businesses, and support the town's economy. Promoted through social media,</p>	

		local press, and community channels, it reinforced the value of independent retail and the importance of keeping Christmas spending in Frome.	
	Partner with Frome College to deliver a busking event in the town centre with opportunities for young people to perform	At time of writing we are just about to deliver this event – Lucy will give a verbal update at the meeting.	
	International Women's Day: Work with partners to highlight and support work in this area	This year's Frome Women's Day focused on tackling violence against women and girls , designed to lead to a set of concrete actions to improve safety, education, and awareness in Frome but not necessarily owned by Frome town council.	

		<p>We looked at four settings where abuse takes place, and those actions are:</p> <p>Domestic Abuse Support - We will recruit volunteers to distribute posters and stickers in public spaces signposting victims to support services. The safe spaces network will expand to include more locations, such as pubs, with staff training supported by SIDAS. Frome FM will produce awareness-raising shows, led by Julia Wellard.</p> <p>Male Allyship & Bystander Action - Avon and Somerset Police's bystander training will be promoted across Frome, with an aim to make Frome a White Ribbon Town, encouraging training and empathy-led engagement. Discussions will also focus on challenging misogyny through non-violent communication and creating safe spaces for open dialogue.</p> <p>Education & Young People - Frome College will lead male-led small-group discussions and promote Aspire and Your Wellbeing Map wellbeing groups. A social behaviour code of conduct for students and parents is in development. Carla C will research and share best practices for online safety and tackling misogyny. Students will also engage with local PCSOs through talks and walk-and-talk sessions with police.</p> <p>Safety at Night - Local businesses will promote bystander training, and community-led evening activities will encourage safer public spaces after dark. A Detached Youth Work initiative will seek funding from the Violence Reduction Unit. A Walk and Talk police vlog will highlight safety concerns and provide feedback to authorities. <i>These actions will all strengthen Frome's commitment to safety, education, and community action, hopefully leading to real change</i></p> <p>A safer future for women and girls is the leaflet that has been produced from this work.</p>	
	Work with partners to support events that support our	Frome Town Council collaborates with event organisers to support a wide range of events that bring the community together and celebrate the town's vibrant culture. From our own large-scale initiatives like Great Big Green Week, where we work with partners to champion sustainability, to Frome Festival, a cornerstone of the town's arts and entertainment scene,	

	objectives in the town	and Photo Frome, which highlights photography and visual storytelling, these events contribute to the town's rich and diverse calendar. By working in partnership, we can help ensure these events are well-promoted, accessible, and successful, enhancing Frome's reputation as a hub for creativity, sustainability, and community engagement.	
	Deliver an Apple day celebration	Frome's Apple Day is a celebration of the town's orchard heritage. Usually held in the autumn at the Showfield, the event brings the community together to enjoy apple pressing, tastings, and a variety of family-friendly activities. With a focus on sustainability and traditional skills, Apple Day usually offers a fun and educational experience for all to be in our community orchard. Sadly, this year due to adverse conditions underfoot it had to be cancelled – but lots of the activities were rescheduled for the Wassail.	
	Work with RBLI to deliver a remembrance event	Last year, Frome's 2024 Remembrance Parade saw a strong turnout from the local community, with veterans, cadets, and civic leaders taking part in a moving service at the Memorial Theatre. Despite planning for a water station and providing flapjacks for participants before marching, the event was marred by an unusual number of fainting incidents. The unseasonably warm weather and lack of standing practice were identified as key factors. A post-event wash up has outlined several measures to help prevent this from happening in the future.	
	Identify and support new opportunities as they arise in step with our strategic objectives	A number of new opportunities presented themselves last year – this included Wilding, a sold out showing at the Merlin followed by an excellent Q&A, Apple day tree giveaway, Frome Business innovators forum, and Plastic Free Period just giving campaign and event to name but a few...	
	Create a celebration event for 50 years of FTC	We celebrated the council's 50th anniversary with a vibrant community event in Victoria Park. Families enjoyed a packed programme of entertainment, including The Magical Storybox, a Sing-a-ling music workshop, and activities provided by The Pod and the Carnival Club's Thomas train. A dedicated kids' arena offered bubbles, garden games, and creative play. Live music filled the park throughout the day, with performances from Frome Town	

		<p>Band, Butane Skies, and soloist Millie Steel, culminating in a lively ceilidh with the South West Ceilidh Band.</p> <p>Food and drink were plentiful, with a barbecue from the Victoria Park community café, wood-fired pizza, and a pop-up bar by the Cheese and Grain, while ice cream proved especially popular under the welcome sunshine. Joined by the Mayor and The High Sheriff of Somerset, Rob Beckley, many charities, and community groups hosted activities and stalls. , Highlighting Frome's strong community spirit and our commitment to bringing people together the event was a fitting tribute to 50 years of Frome Town Council.</p>	
	3 events a year - Donate IT	<p>This is a partnership project delivered with Donate IT. There were two successful tech amnesty events last year, one in June and one in January, collecting over 1000 unwanted digital devices. Although extremely successful the future of these events is not secure as Donate It goes through some changes.</p>	
	Recruit and deliver a team of support stewards to operate in the town hall and at external events	<p>Our support stewards play a vital role in keeping Frome's events and activities running smoothly. Their dedication ensures that everything from Town Hall meetings to community engagement activities is well-supported.</p> <p>The support steward list is reviewed each year to develop the skills of those on it, ensuring FTC has a capable and adaptable team ready to assist with events, activities, bar service, leaflet drops, listings, and more. They also provide crucial cover for the front desk and Sean when needed, maintaining a consistent level of service at the Town Hall.</p> <p>Scheduled monthly by Nykki, we currently have 14 stewards on our list, each bringing valuable skills and enthusiasm to their role.</p>	