

Minutes of a meeting of Frome Town Council

Wednesday 12 February 2025, 7pm
Frome Town Hall and Zoom

Present:

In the Town Hall: Tracey Ashford, Fiona Barrows, Sara Butler, Philip Campagna, Anita Collier, Carla Collenette, Mark Dorrington, Nick Dove, Anne Hills, Andy Jones (Chair), Polly Lamb, Ben Still, Steve Tanner, Mel Usher, Max Wide

In attendance:

Clare Moody (Avon and Somerset Police and Crime Commissioner), Rachel Clark (Neighbourhood Police Inspector), Adam Boyden (SC Cllr), Michael Dunk (SC Cllr, online), Paul Wynne (Town Clerk), Peter Wheelhouse (Deputy Town Clerk), Sarah Williams (Business Manager), Rachel Griffin (Marketing and Communications Manager), Jane Llewellyn (Planning and Development Manager), Rob Holden (Environment Manager, online), Nikki Cox (Partnership Lead), Hannah Stopford (Engagement Lead), Laura Flaherty (Executive Assistant to the Town Clerk and Mayor), Becca Evans (Business Administrator)

Approx. 30 members of the public were in attendance at Frome Town Hall
4 members of the public were in attendance on Zoom.

To watch to the discussion in full visit: www.youtube.com/watch?v=Mn3caZkIzKw&t=175s

Minute Ref	Agenda Item	Action
2025/10/FC	<p>1a. Apologies for absence Fiona Barrows proposed to accept apologies from Lisa Merryweather and Andy Wrintmore, seconded by Sara Butler, agreed unanimously.</p> <p>1b. Declaration of members' interests Anita Collier, Anne Hills, and Philip Campagna declared other registrable interests in agenda item 5.</p> <p>1c. Minutes from the last meeting on 15 January 2025 Mark Dorrington asked for an update on the removal of the residents parking scheme on Weymouth Road. Jane Llewellyn confirmed that Somerset Council (SC) was about to issue a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) proposing to remove the restrictions and that anyone could respond to SC to that TRO proposal.</p> <p>The minutes of the Frome Town Council meeting held on 15 January 2025 were approved as a true record of the meeting and signed by the Chair.</p> <p>Proposed by Anita Collier, seconded by Steve Tanner, agreed</p>	

	<p>unanimously.</p> <p>Max Wide arrived at 7.05pm</p>	
<p>2025/11/FC</p>	<p>2. Questions from public and Cllrs</p> <p>Lyndsey Mayhew from Canteen provided an update on their community pop-up restaurant events held at Holy Trinity Church Hall. The events aimed to bring the community together and offer locally grown, wholesome food at a pay-what-you-can price including tokens for those who could not afford to pay. Lyndsey asked Cllrs and public to promote the next event on 18 February and encouraged community members to attend.</p> <p>A member of the public, Gavin, raised a concern about the removal of the extended taxi rank at Cork Street, with eight taxis now squeezing into four bays. Paul Wynne was asked to investigate.</p> <p>Sara Butler and Nick Dove raised concern about litter and poor quality of refuse collection in the town, particularly around bus stops in the town centre and the route from the train station into town. Nick Dove also raised concerns about uncoordinated commercial waste collection.</p> <p>Paul Wynne was asked to write to the Leader and CE of SC about these concerns and ask to meet to discuss them. And to contact the SC contract manager and idverde as well about improving litter collection.</p> <p>Nick also mentioned the issue of delays in processing planning applications at SC and felt there was a need for an urgent review of the planning department. Paul Wynne was asked to write to SC requesting this.</p> <p>Anne Hills raised safety concerns about overgrown shrubs and a blocked drain at the Christchurch Street and Wesley Slope corner. Paul Wynne was asked to follow these up with SC.</p> <p>Adam Boyden noted that SC were cutting 10% of the workforce by April which is causing disruption and an impact on delays in decision making while Government has agreed that SC could raise the precept by 7.5% next year.</p> <p>Bill Revans, the Leader of SC, who was on Zoom, reaffirmed SC's commitment to devolution including the transfer of the weekly markets and asked that FTC establish and maintain good communications with the market traders during the period of uncertainty. He asked that FTC bear with SC over delays during</p>	<p>PWY</p> <p>PWY</p> <p>PWY</p> <p>PWY</p>

	<p>the staff restructuring process. He thanked FTC for all they did for the residents of Frome.</p> <p>Peter Wheelhouse was asked to write to SC Cllr Mike Rigby about geographical representation and gender split in the membership of the Somerset growth development board and the spread of the consultation events around the county, in both cases to ensure good access for Frome businesses and others.</p> <p>Steve Tanner updated on recent planning application outcomes including Packsaddle being refused, Selwood Garden Community being called in by Secretary of State. The battery store at Styles Hill was refused and the solar panels on the Lucky Chance building was approved. Steve noted that Cllrs and staff had met with the developers and Berkley Parish Council about the proposed development at Oldford. He explained that FTC would continue to engage with all parties to get the best development for the town.</p> <p>Tracy Ashford arrived at 7.20pm.</p>	<p>PWh</p>
<p>2025/12/FC</p>	<p>3. A short presentation from Clare Moody, Avon and Somerset Police and Crime Commissioner</p> <p>Clare Moody, the Police and Crime Commissioner, provided an overview of her strategic role at Avon and Somerset Police. She emphasised that the PCC role was not about operational functions.</p> <p>She outlined five priorities she had for her term which were:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Strengthening neighbourhood policing 2. Reducing violent crime – this was particularly around reducing serious youth violence and violence against women and girls. 3. Preventing crime 4. Supporting victims of crime 5. Improving standards in policing <p>Anita Collier asked about the role of AI in road safety and the benefits and dangers of AI in policing. Clare acknowledged the potential of AI in identifying patterns and improving efficiency but emphasised the need for careful implementation.</p> <p>Andy Jones raised a concern about the relocation of the public contact point from the library to the police station. Rachel Clark, Neighbourhood Police Inspector, explained the reasons for the relocation, including better accessibility for the public,</p>	

	<p>collaboration with the police colleagues and the availability of confidential meeting spaces.</p> <p>Carla Collenette questioned the allocation of budget for prevention programmes in schools. Clare acknowledged the need for more work in this area and the importance of addressing misogyny and online violence.</p> <p>Anne Hills raised concerns about the poor conviction rates for domestic abuse and the need for better support for victims. Clare discussed ongoing efforts to improve the response to domestic abuse and the importance of early intervention and support.</p> <p>Nick Dove emphasised the importance of neighbourhood policing and suggested that more resources should be allocated to admin support for neighbourhood policing. Clare agreed to take away the idea of administrative support and acknowledged the need for more resources in policing.</p> <p>Adam Boyden shared personal experiences of local youth crime not being investigated to the extent that it had been in the past. Clare reiterated the challenges resulting from cuts to police budgets but reassured the police were committed to addressing youth crime and improving their response.</p>	
<p>2025/13/FC</p>	<p>4. For decision – Approve the transfer of assets and services from Somerset Council</p> <p>Peter Wheelhouse presented the proposal to transfer assets and services from Somerset Council, including the Key Centre, Market Yard toilet block, weekly markets, and open spaces.</p> <p>The discussion concluded with a commitment to further discussions on long-term management arrangements and the importance of securing a comprehensive deal with Somerset Council.</p> <p>Peter Wheelhouse noted there had been amendment to recommendation 4 to:</p> <p>The transfer of the weekly markets, market rights and charter and the delegation of authority to the Business Manager to complete the necessary legal agreements with Somerset Council - in the first instance, FTC to operate the weekly markets under Part 111 of the Food Act 1984</p> <p>Proposed by Sara Butler, seconded by Max Wide, agreed unanimously.</p>	

	<p>The recommendations were that Cllrs approve:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The transfer of the freehold of the Key Centre and Mount Community Garden and the delegation of authority to the Business Manager to complete the necessary legal agreements with Somerset Council 2. Delegation of authority to the Deputy Town Clerk to recruit an Interim Coordinator for the Key Centre and community garden on a freelance contract basis utilising the agreed budget 3. Delegation of authority to the Deputy Town Clerk to lead an exploration of potential future management options for the Key Centre and community garden in consultation with stakeholders and bring a report on these options back to Council <p>Proposed by Anne Hills, seconded by Nick Dove, agreed unanimously.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. The transfer of the weekly markets, market rights and charter and the delegation of authority to the Business Manager to complete the necessary legal agreements with Somerset Council - in the first instance, FTC to operate the weekly markets under Part 111 of the Food Act 1984 5. Delegation of authority to the Marketing & Communications Manager to recruit an Interim Coordinator for the weekly markets on a freelance contract basis utilising the agreed budget 6. Delegation of authority to the Marketing & Communications Manager to lead an exploration of potential future delivery options for the weekly markets in consultation with market traders and other stakeholders and bring a report on these options back to Council <p>Proposed by Philip Campagna, seconded by Fiona Barrows, agreed unanimously.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7. The transfer of the Market Yard toilet block on a 25-year lease and peppercorn rent and delegation of authority to the Business Manager to complete the necessary legal agreements 8. Delegation of authority to the Marketing & Communications Manager to arrange appropriate cleaning and maintenance of the Market Yard toilets by an external contractor utilising the agreed budget 9. Delegation of authority to the Marketing & Communications Manager to investigate refurbishment options, including funding opportunities and long-term management solutions for the Market Yard toilet block and bring a report back to Council. 	<p>PWh</p> <p>PWh</p> <p>SW</p> <p>RG</p> <p>RG</p> <p>SW</p> <p>RG</p> <p>RG</p>
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	<p>Proposed by Mark Dorrington, seconded by Ben Still, agreed unanimously.</p> <p>10. The transfer of all open spaces and play parks shown in Appendix 4.1 and the delegation of authority to the Business Manager to complete the necessary legal agreements with Somerset Council</p> <p>11. Taking on a 25-year lease of parts of the Highways Depot to enable its use by the Environment Team and the delegation of authority to the Business Manager to complete the necessary legal agreements with Somerset Council</p> <p>12. Delegation of authority to the Environment Manager to procure the equipment necessary for the maintenance of open spaces and play parks utilising the budgets agreed by Council</p> <p>13. The other devolution proposals set out in Section 8 of this report and delegation of authority to the Deputy Town Clerk in consultation with the Business Manager to finalise negotiations and complete any necessary legal agreements with Somerset Council</p> <p>Proposed by Nick Dove, seconded by Carla Collenette, agreed unanimously.</p> <p>Steve Tanner noted thanks to Bill Revans and the teams at Somerset Council who enabled this proposal to go ahead.</p>	<p>SW</p> <p>SW</p> <p>RH</p> <p>PWh/SW</p>
<p>2025/14/FC</p>	<p>5. A verbal update on building work project at Badgers Hill</p> <p>Peter noted that good progress had been made on the construction of the changing room block and other works. He noted the project was on schedule to be completed by mid March.</p>	
<p>2025/15/FC</p>	<p>The proposal was for the next item to be held in confidential session; therefore members of the press and public were asked to leave.</p> <p>Proposed by Steve Tanner, seconded by Anita Collier, agreed unanimously.</p>	
<p>2025/16/FC</p>	<p>6. For information – review of current debtors</p> <p>Cllrs noted the report on current debtors.</p>	
<p>2025/17/FC</p>	<p>The next meeting will be at 7pm on Wednesday 12 March 2025, Frome Town Hall and Zoom</p>	

The chair closed the public meeting at: 8.55pm

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