

Minutes of a meeting of the Oversight Committee

Wednesday 7 May 2025, 7pm
Frome Town Hall and Zoom

Present:

In the Town Hall: Fiona Barrows, Anne Hills, Andy Jones (Chair), Steve Tanner, Mel Usher

In attendance:

Cllr Carla Collenette, Paul Wynne (Town Clerk), Nikki Cox (Partnership Lead), Hannah Stopford (Engagement Lead), Laura Flaherty (Executive Assistant to the Town Clerk and Mayor), Becca Evans (Business Administrator), Lucy McMahon (Lead Marketing and Communications Officer)

o members of the public was in attendance at Frome Town Hall

o members of the public were in attendance on Zoom

To watch the discussion in full visit: www.youtube.com/watch?v=xUzOo-PhDUc

Minute Ref	Agenda Item	Action
2025/26/OS	The meeting started at 7pm The Chair of the Oversight Committee, Cllr Mark Dorrington sent his apologies. In his absence Fiona Barrows proposed Andy Jones as Chair of the meeting, seconded by Steve Tanner, agreed unanimously. Andy took the chair. 1a. Apologies for absence Fiona Barrows proposed to accept apologies from Mark Dorrington, Nick Dove and Ben Still, seconded by Anne Hills, agreed unanimously. 1b. Declaration of members' interests None was declared. 1c. Minutes from the last meeting on 26 March 2025 The minutes of the Oversight Committee meeting held on 26 March 2025 were approved as a true record of the meeting and signed by the Chair. Proposed by Steve Tanner, seconded by Anne Hills, agreed unanimously.	
2025/27/OS	2. Questions and comments Fiona Barrows asked for an update on Frome leisure centre after the recent operational issues. Paul Wynne confirmed he was meeting the new manager on Friday. After that meeting he would be in touch with Somerset Council.	

	Carla Collenette asked if there was an update after a letter was sent to the MP, Anna Sabine, about resident concerns of speeding on Broadway. Paul explained that he was waiting to receive a reply.	
2025/28/OS	3. For information – Update on the work progress of the Communities Team Hannah Stopford and Nikki Cox provided an update on the communities team's work. Cllrs noted the report. Hannah highlighted the Ecos Court Veg Patch Sprouts which started as a connection between Live West and the Seed Library and created many more community links and the removal of a troublesome share box in Great Western Street which demonstrated the positive act of listening and responding. The transformation of Milk Street Green which had reengaged residents and the nearby school and the Henley Way Walk accessibility audit championing equality and diversity. Engagement work with residents was starting on a small number of open spaces recently acquired as part of the devolution project. Hannah ended with some highlights of community organisation support including the networking sessions which had created new and better connections. Nikki Cox updated the committee on the Welcome hub, including support for a family appealing a negative asylum decision. Nikki noted the play strategy update, work of the Lunch Bunch project, acquiring the scrapstore Play Trolley and Speakeasy's detached youth work which was funded by a police crime grant. Anne Hills said she had appreciated the story telling from Nikki's presentation which for her had brought the report to life. She said that the presentation made clear that community engagement was about bringing people together, finding the gaps, and FTC facilitating the community to take ownership. Steve Tanner requested regular updates on the Key Centre. Nikki noted this and currently she was having conversations with Somerset Council about a tender process for a nursery on the site. Cllrs asked Nikki and Hannah what they were finding most challenging about their work currently. For Nikki it was the amount of work, considerations of devolution, prioritising work, staff changes and	NC

	ensuring all considerations were made before acting. For Hannah it was working with communities who had varied and sometimes conflicting needs, overcoming tensions, external factors and delays, consequences of partnerships and being reliant on communities motivation and participation. Anne Hills commented that working with communities and engaging took a generation, Cllrs often expected results to fit into an election cycle and it didn't happen that way.	
2025/29/OS	4. For approval – Mary Baily co-design project with Young People Nikki Cox provided a summary of the report. She explained the project's aim was to enhance safety and reduce anti-social behaviour. Mel Usher raised concerns about the project's cost and potential for creating unrealistic expectations. Nikki explained that the project would be mindful of this and they would use skilled practitioners that would manage expectations as well as work with the environment team to understand what could be realistically achieved. Fiona Barrows emphasised the need for a specific space for teenagers to hang out and questioned the location's suitability. Nikki explained it would be part of the design phase; they would be working with an organisation that could consider noise pollution, safe use of space, and suitable design. The recommendations were: 1. The project would be allocated £12,000 from the Communities Team Funding. 2. Commissioning an organisation to lead the project will be delegated to Nikki Cox and Melody Hunter Evans in the Communities Team. Proposed by Fiona Barrows, seconded by Anne Hills, agreed by majority. Mel Usher abstained.	NC/ MHE
2025/30/OS	5. For decision - To transfer the £15,000 funds raised for refugees to Frome Rotary Club for distribution A summary of the report was given by Paul Wynne on behalf of Cllr Anita Collier. Cllrs discussed the report and recommendation but expressed concerns about the transparency and decision making process for how the funds were allocated. The recommendation was to authorise Frome Town Council to transfer the balance in the EMR 328 Ukraine Appeal £15, 900.06 to Frome Rotary Club for allocation by FWRAG.	

	Steve Tanner proposed to defer the recommendation, seconded by Fiona Barrows, agreed unanimously.	PWy/ AC
2025/31/OS	6. For decision – to approve an update to Chapter 22 Volunteer Policy Cllrs noted the report. Andy Jones questioned the removal of the mention to the volunteer handbook. Laura Flaherty explained this was because it did not exist. All volunteers signed an agreement which set out the expectations of the role and they were also given an induction by the lead staff member on the project they would be taking part in. As each volunteer role was individual this system worked well. The recommendation was to approve the updated Chapter 22 Volunteer Policy at Appendix 6.1 Proposed by Anne Hills, seconded by Fiona Barrows , agreed unanimously.	
2025/32/OS	7. For decision - Approval of updates to Chapter 11 – Health, Safety and Welfare Policy Cllrs noted the report. Carla Collenette asked about Cllr access to training. Laura Flaherty explained all Cllrs had an account on the online training platform ihasco, which provided multiple topics such as first aid and safeguarding. Other suitable training that could be extended to Cllrs and arranged by FTC, Cllrs would be notified of. Andy Jones asked about regular safety checks of the Town Hall being mentioned in the policy. Laura noted she would confirm if this were necessary with the Town Hall Steward. The recommendation was to approve and adopt the updated Health, Safety and Welfare policy at Appendix 7.1. Proposed by Fiona Barrows, seconded by Steve Tanner, agreed unanimously.	LF
2025/33/OS	8. For information – Update on staff starters and leavers Cllrs noted the report.	
2025/34/OS	The next meeting will be at 7pm on Wednesday 23 July 2025, Frome Town Hall and Zoom	

The Chair closed the meeting at 8.09pm