

Agenda item 6

For information – Review of the Open Spaces and Business Services work programmes

Author: Rob Holden, Environment Manager and Sarah Williams, Business Manager

Open Spaces – Rob Holden, Environment Manager

No particular highlights or sticking points.

Business Services – Sarah Williams, Business Manager & RFO

The highlight and sticking point is all around IT so the bad news was that the overall IT project was delayed and the good news is that we've started the Cyber Security exercise aspect. We have obtained a report from ITEC our IT support company. We will next be working on installing appropriate software on all devices used by staff and Cllrs for FTC work.

We are also in discussion with an IT consultant on assisting with the re-organisation of our filing system and transfer of all files to the cloud. We will ask the IT consultant to review our Microsoft subscriptions and offer alternatives to reduce cost if possible, without reducing the security.

Open Spaces	
Aim: To maintain and enhance the town's open spaces, including the presentation of the town centre. Key goals include: ensuring local communities have inclusive, accessible green spaces and tree cover that work for them; improving biodiversity and contributing to efforts to minimise our carbon footprint; helping to make Frome Town more playful and continuing to support Allotments for residents	
Objective: Support biodiversity rich, accessible, attractive and safe places for residents and visitors	
Project	Status
Engage with existing and new potential users from the community on management plan reviews	On track
Ensure our parks and open spaces are places that people value highly to enjoy, are accessible and inclusive, and support a wide range of outdoor activities and bio-diversity, including community food growing.	On track
Objective: Sufficient allotments for the needs people in the town	
Project	Status
Work with Frome Allotment Assoc to support groups with their ongoing management and help with boundary / access and tree issues	On track
Review options and search for new allotments spaces, including in new developments and beyond the parish boundary.	On track
Objective: Proper maintenance of all properties in the public realm owned or leased by FTC	
Project	Status
Open spaces maintenance and development	On track
Collaboration with partner agencies on land, works and maintenance across Open Spaces and the town	On track
Frome Medical Practice income	On track
Objective: Mitigate climate and ecological emergencies	
Project	Status
Tree Management	On track
Move towards electrical equipment	On track
Using data gathered through our Wildlife Mapping Project, work with the Environment Team to adapt the management plans for Council owned open spaces.	On track
Work with organisations working in this field e.g. Friends of the River Frome, the Wild Bunch etc., to explore how activities can be better co-ordinated.	On track
Objective: Support a professional and compliant ranger work force	
Project	Status
Rangers well resourced and trained	On track

Key:



On track

Project no longer
on track without
amendmentProject has been
unsuccessful or
stopped

Business Services	
Aim: To provide excellent financial management and forecasting, a professional HR service, manage risk effectively and ensure IT provision is fit for purpose	
Objective: Ensure accurate and timely upkeep of FTC's financial records - planning, budgeting, procurement, processing, monitoring and reporting	
Project	Status
Sound financial planning, monitoring, procurement & management of reserves	
Precept & AGAR submissions	
Objective: Ensure IT hardware, software and office equipment is fit for purpose and regularly reviewed	
Project	Status
Review the quotations received for updating IT hardware & software across the organisation, commission the implementation of appropriate aspects given those already undertaken in 2024/25	
Ensure all office systems facilitate cost effective administrative efficiency	
Objective: Oversight of HR policies and processes	
Project	Status
Annually review Staff Handbook and all contained policies	
Review recruitment processes incl. regular liaison with solicitors and payroll advisors	
Utilise HR consultant organisation and solicitor fees	
Ensure payroll for the organisation is carried out accurately and promptly	
Continue to review and develop staff policies	
Review of staff & cllr training policies.	
Increase capacity to manage the HR provision	
Objective: Internal control & managing risk, incl. Risk Register & GDPR policies & procedures	
Project	Status
Insurance cover maintained across the estate supporting all FTC managed sites and assets	
Regularly review and update Internal Controls	
Review FTC's GDPR policies & procedures	
Oversight of all legal agreements FTC enters into including working partnerships, contractors and tenants across FTC owned sites	