

### Agenda item 3

#### For discussion - Marketing and Communications Update

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#### Summary

This report is an overview of the Events element of the work of the Marketing and Communications team - it looks at the events delivered so far this year, the objectives that they are designed to meet and achieve, and also takes a look forward at the planning for the next tranche of events as we head into the next half of the year.

#### General

The Marketing and Communications team have had another very busy summer, promoting, and delivering a number of projects, events and initiatives designed to engage the town, our visitors and promote the town and the work of the Frome Town Council. The work of the comms team, as stated in our strategy, is roughly divided cross three workstreams:

- The Town Hall, promoting and supporting the events that happen in it and ensuring good occupation rates.
- Discover Frome, serving visitors to Frome and our residents and promoting events and opportunities across the town, which also segues into supporting our cultural organisations, walking, and cycling, and the arts.
- Finally, and arguably most importantly, delivering and promoting objectives that support our residents, our community groups and highlight the work of Frome Town Council. This is underpinned by our marketing and communications strategy, which in turn is designed to support as many of the wider team's strategic objectives as possible as described in the annual work programme.

Events and meetings are an effective way to engage with the town; bringing people together to share, learn, celebrate, and feel supported and heard. For that reason, events are the bedrock of our work in the comms team, whether it's hosting our own or supporting and promoting other events. At the outset, we establish the objectives that the event seeks to deliver, to inform the choices we make and how we put the event together, and to gauge its success afterwards. Wherever possible, we work with community partners; this is to ensure a greater number of events overall, to tap into the talents of our community to ensure a more diverse range of events and activities is on offer, and to pool resources by lending our support in promoting and organising others' events.

Broadly events can be divided into five categories:

- Events that the Marketing and Communications team deliver as our own projects.

- Events that are those of the wider Frome Town Council team.
- Events that we enable to happen in our parks and open spaces and on the Boyle Cross.
- Town Hall events.
- External events that we support and help to promote such as those going on in the Cheese and Grain, pubs, theatres, and venues.

All events that fall into the first three categories need:

- An Event Management Plan (EMP) – stating details of the event and the why/when/where/how of each event. For smaller events this can take the form of a spreadsheet and an event log.
- A Risk Assessment (RA) – identifying and mitigating risk.
- Public liability insurance
- An event map
- Where road closures are needed, a travel management plan and a road closure application
- If the event takes place on an FTC green space, a completed open spaces booking form.

Events delivered and supported April to August 2024:

#### Marketing and Comms team events

- Annual Town Meeting
- Pop-up events at the Old Showfield, including a go-kart derby and very well attended dog parkour and hoopers event with Charismatic Pets
- Great Big Green Week 2024 (40 events)
- Weddings
- Community Celebration
- Donate IT tech amnesty and rolling promotion/collection point at the town hall
- Hustings

#### FTC – wider team

- Regular Healthy Homes and Retrofit events, including talks, drop-in advice, and roadshows
- Let's Talk events
- Community organisations networking events and clinics
- Bat counts
- Refugee Week events including a graffiti workshop, concert, family day, comedy night and school's liaison
- Monthly Wild Bunch meetings
- Building a Picture of our Town – supporting data collection, creating visual representations of data for use at public and staff/local organisations events

#### Third party events we support

- Playpod events
- Frome Festival events
- Play Day event

- Frome Children's Festival
- Frome Walking Festival
- Frome Running Festival

### Providing spaces

We also support organisations by providing space within the town hall and facilitating the use of our park and open spaces for events. We prioritise those events which support the council's objectives. We support event organisers to deliver their event safely, providing guidance and practical support where needed, and using our channels and voice to promote them.

### Promoting and supporting wider town events

Even if we aren't actively involved with the organisation of events, the marketing and comms team have a significant role to play with promotion and information sharing. Examples of this include listing events on the well-used Discover Frome website, with around 50,000 views per month, our network of community noticeboards and publicising events through our social media channels.

### Working with others

Wherever possible, we work with community groups and others to deliver events in partnership. A good example of the success of this type of working is the annual Remembrance event at the Memorial Theatre. The British Legion are experts in running their event but make use of our expertise with applying for a road closure, conducting the risk assessment, and promoting the event in print and digital media.

Other town events such as Frome Running Festival, Frome Carnival, Ride Kids Ride and the Somerset Farmers' market access parks and open spaces for their events. Our role is to ensure they have the relevant paperwork for their event, such as food hygiene certificates, gas safety, a vehicle access plan or portable appliance testing (PAT) in place. We can then issue permission for them to deliver the event on our land. This ultimately ensures that we are covered if anything goes wrong and also supports them in the smooth running of their event

Ultimately, if the events deliver their strategic objectives, the plan is to be as light touch as possible, increasing our capacity for events in Frome overall. Some events, such as the Walking Festival, need more support: FTC create and coordinate the printing of a brochure and lead on ticketing and promotion. The decision about the level of support is made on a case-by-case basis, gauging what we know about the demand for and success of the event in the past. For instance, the majority of Walking Festival events in 2024 were sold out and the event continues to be extremely popular with residents, justifying, we believe, the resource spent on it.

### Coming soon

We are planning a Mary Baily/Victoria Park engagement project, working in partnership with stakeholders such as the Bowls Club, Victoria Park Café, Frome Skatepark Project and the tennis club to put on events and activities to attract people and have conversations, engaging

with a wide range of people who use the space and finding out where their priorities lie. This will ultimately inform the management plan. This follows the Showfield engagement project undertaken in April.

Planning for Apple Day, the Remembrance event and the annual lantern parade are progressing with road closures in place. The 'Wilding' screening at the Merlin on 27<sup>th</sup> September sold out extremely quickly and could indicate an interest in more events of this nature.

### Promoting FTC events

The Marketing and Comms team also support events which are arranged and delivered by the wider FTC team. This usually involves a package of support which can include branding, ticketing, PR, creating marketing collateral such as posters and presentation materials, and digital assets, as well as a package of social media support.

Examples of recurring events that fall within this area of work include the energy advice drop-ins and roadshows, Retrofit activities, the Wild Bunch meetings, Play Pod on Tour sessions and the recent town-wide engagement and research project.

Due to the high volume of activity within FTC's teams and a busy event calendar across all types, we often find our capacity is tested to the limit and need to cut our cloth with the level of support provided in this area.

### The Events Advisory Group

This year, we have set up an Events Advisory group, to ensure we're working closely with Cllrs on the calendar of events we run and support at FTC. The group meets four times a year, is open to all Cllrs, and gives the Marketing and Comms team a steer in planning and implementing events. The group doesn't have decision-making powers, which are still taken at council meetings or by the Marketing and Comms Manager, as appropriate. The next Events Advisory Group meeting will be on 24<sup>th</sup> September.

### Conclusion

We work hard across the team to shape events which help to deliver our strategy, meet our objectives, and create a high-quality product for the benefit of the community. At the time of writing, we are just about to revisit the successful dog agility event at the Old Showfield, to progress the idea for a canine play area that was strongly indicated in the engagement from April 2024. The Mary Baily engagement events and Apple Day are progressing, and plans are in process for the larger events of the year, the Remembrance parade, and Christmas Lantern Parade. Early conversations have begun about a 2025 wassail event, and we have made a healthy inroad into this year's work programme.

### Discussion

Events are a great engagement tool and bring people together around a common theme for learning, shared experience and can have community value - but year on year new events are added to the workstream and are rarely removed. As we look toward to next year's work programme, we ask are we delivering too many events across FTC team, how can prioritise those that make it into the workstream and ensure that rather than becoming an onerous burden particularly for the Marketing and Communications team they are adequately resourced.