

Minutes of a meeting of Frome Town Council

Wednesday 4 December 2024, 7pm
Frome Town Hall and Zoom

Present:

In the Town Hall: Fiona Barrows, Philip Campagna, Anita Collier, Carla Collenette, Mark Dorrington, Nick Dove, Anne Hills, Andy Jones (Chair), Ben Still, Steve Tanner, Mel Usher

In attendance:

Police Inspector Rachel Clark, Dawn Denton (SC Cllr), Shane Collins (SC Cllr), Adam Boyden (SC Cllr, online), Paul Wynne (Town Clerk), Peter Wheelhouse (Deputy Town Clerk), Laura Flaherty (Executive Assistant to the Town Clerk and Mayor), Becca Evans (Business Administrator), Matt Mellen (Climate Action Lead)

8 members of the public were in attendance at Frome Town Hall
1 member of the public was in attendance on Zoom.

To watch to the discussion in full visit: www.youtube.com/watch?v=asgvvbRu8Bo

| Minute Ref | Agenda Item | Action |
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| 2024/96/FC | <p>The meeting started at 7pm</p> <p>1. A brief presentation from Police Inspector Rachel Clark Rachel Clark explained her responsibilities, including managing neighborhood policing in Frome, Shepton Mallet, Glastonbury, and Street. She also described the structure of the local police team, including patrol officers and neighborhood officers. Rachel discussed the current PCSO recruitment pause which was due to be lifted in the spring. She emphasised the importance of performance and collaboration within the team. She highlighted the various meetings and collaborations the policing team engages in including retail, licensing and council meetings.</p> <p>Rachel stressed the need for improved communication with the community. She mentioned the use of social media platforms and the Avon and Somerset police website for updates.</p> <p>Rachel spoke about the recent road safety operation in Frome, which resulted in several arrests and seizures. There was interest in having more road policing teams in Frome for more visible presence. An AI camera was due to be installed along the Frome bypass which would be able to pick up more things like seatbelt offences and mobile use. Over Christmas there would also be a road campaign to target drink and drug driving. Rachel noted that Frome had the most active community speed watch</p> | |

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| | <p>group in the area and there was a particularly good working relationship between that group and her team. PCSOs would be out on the roadside once a month.</p> <p>Another initiative Rachel mentioned was the Walk and Talk initiative aimed at addressing violence against women and girls. Anyone could book to walk with a female police officer and talk about their concerns. The objectives of the initiative were to reduce these violent crimes, help women and girls feel safer in their communities and improve police community engagement.</p> <p>Fiona Barrows questioned the emphasis on changing the behaviour of women and girls rather than changing the behaviour of men and boys, in addressing violence against women and girls. Rachel explained that the Walk and Talk initiative aimed to gather data and address identified issues.</p> <p>A member of the public raised their concerns about the enforcement of the School Streets project, particularly on Oakfield Road. Rachel acknowledged the issue and spoke about her ongoing discussions with Somerset Council and their enforcement team.</p> <p>Nick Dove and other local traders expressed concerns about shoplifting and aggressive behavior in the town centre. Rachel discussed the team's efforts to tackle retail crime, including issuing criminal behaviour orders. She emphasised the importance of reporting incidents and the need for better communication between the police and the community. She offered to meet with the local traders to address their concerns and improve reporting processes.</p> | |
| <p>2024/97/FC</p> | <p>2. A verbal update from Anita Collier Anita Collier discussed the importance of road safety and the various measures being taken to improve it. She mentioned the use of unmarked vans for enforcement and the need for more visible police presence. Anita highlighted the success of community speed watch and the ongoing efforts to address speeding in key areas. She discussed the potential for a town-wide 20 mph speed limit and the need for further discussions with stakeholders. Anita thanked Racel Clark and her colleagues for all their input in improving road safety.</p> | |
| <p>2024/98/FC</p> | <p>3a. Apologies for absence Anne Hills proposed to accept apologies from Tracey Ashford, Polly Lamb, and Max Wide, seconded by Fiona Barrows, agreed unanimously.</p> | |

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| | <p>3b. Declaration of members' interests None was received.</p> <p>3c. Minutes from the last meeting on 13 November 2024 Fiona Barrows corrected her suggestion that People for Packsaddle worked with FACLT rather than Live West as stated in the draft minutes. The minutes were amended accordingly.</p> <p>Peter Wheelhouse noted that he wrote to Cllr Richard Wilkins and Duncan Sharkey to get clarification regarding the decision to remove the parking restrictions along Weymouth Road.</p> <p>The minutes of the Frome Town Council meeting held on 13 November 2024 were approved (as amended) as a true record of the meeting and signed by the Chair.</p> <p>Proposed by Nick Dove, seconded by Steve Tanner, agreed unanimously.</p> | |
| 2024/99/FC | <p>4. Questions from public and Cllrs Steve Tanner provided an update on the Selwood Garden Community planning application; SC Cllrs had voted to 'defer and minded to refuse.' He mentioned the need for further engagement with the planning board on governance and section 106 agreements. Dawn Denton discussed the implications of the planning board's decision and the potential for an appeal. Mel Usher emphasised the importance of affordable housing and the impact on young people and the local community.</p> <p>Paul Wynne read out a written question from Kevin O'Shea, a resident of Weymouth Road who asked Cllr Polly Lamb for the outcome of his alternative proposal to Cllrs regarding the Weymouth Road parking restrictions. Polly was not at the meeting and Paul noted he would ask Polly to contact Kevin directly. Fiona noted that Kevin's proposal had been made by Polly at an internal meeting of Cllrs and that Cllrs felt strongly that a final Council decision had been made democratically.</p> | PL |
| 2024/100/FC | <p>5. For information – Update on the Safer School Streets scheme Peter Wheelhouse provided a summary of the report. Peter discussed the changes to road layouts, including new pedestrian crossing points and 20 mph zones.</p> <p>Peter explained the monitoring process, including vehicle counts and classroom surveys to assess the effectiveness of the scheme. He highlighted the positive impact on active travel, with an increase in the number of students walking and cycling</p> | |

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| | <p>to school. Peter noted there was ongoing work to address snagging issues and improve signage. He outlined the next steps, including further monitoring and engagement with the community to ensure the success of the project.</p> <p>Peter presented a summary of results from a monitoring report completed in October, noting that the full report from Sustrans was still pending. Vehicle speeds on Somerset Road had decreased from 21.3 mph in October 2022 to 20.6 mph in October 2023. Oakfield Road North had seen a decrease in speed from 17.1 mph to 16.2 mph, while Oakfield Road South has decreased from 21 mph to 20.4 mph. Traffic volumes had decreased in Oakfield Road North during morning and afternoon commute hours, with a significant decrease in the morning. Traffic volumes in Oakfield Road South had decreased in the morning but increased in the afternoon, while Somerset Road has seen a decrease in the morning and an increase in the afternoon. Peter presented data on Park Road vehicle counts, showing a 36% decrease in traffic between March and September. Andy Jones commented on the anecdotal evidence of increased active travel among pupils at Critchill School.</p> <p>Peter outlined the next steps, including interrogating the Sustrans monitoring report, completing snagging work, conducting a road safety audit, and a community perception survey in the new year.</p> <p>A member of the public raised concerns about signage and visibility of signs on Oakfield Road, particularly at the junction of Broadway and Oakfield Road. Peter acknowledged the issue and noted the contractor was due to amend the situation with cantilevered signs.</p> <p>Members of the public expressed concerns about the lack of perceived reduction in traffic volume and speed, and the need for better enforcement of restrictions.</p> <p>Carla Collenette highlighted the importance of a police presence and the potential use of cameras for enforcement. She also raised concerns about the lack of a crossing at Broadway, a known dangerous spot for children. Peter explained that Sustrans had secured funding for a crossing, but Somerset Council declined to take it on due to technical reasons.</p> | |
| <p>2024/101/FC</p> | <p>6. For information – Update on Climate Emergency work programme</p> <p>Fiona Barrows introduced Matt Mellen, the new Climate Action Lead, and outlined his role and responsibilities.</p> | |

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| | <p>Matt provided an update on climate action in Frome, emphasising the need for adaptation, mitigation, and building resilience. He discussed the importance of engaging communities, particularly young people, in climate planning and the development of a new climate action plan for Frome.</p> <p>Matt outlined the process of engaging communities, including setting up climate-themed workshops and events. The new climate action plan aimed to be a living document that involved the entire community and addresses both climate and sustainability goals. Matt highlighted the importance of focusing on actions that benefit both health and the climate, such as active travel and energy-efficient homes. Some of the planned upcoming events included a retrofit workshop, a climate adaptation workshop, and various other initiatives to engage the community and businesses.</p> <p>The climate action plan aimed to be ambitious and align with the goal of achieving net zero by 2030, with a focus on both individual and community wide actions.</p> <p>Dawn Denton suggested connecting with the Countryside Alliance's "rooftop first" initiative to encourage solar panel installation on large buildings. Steve Tanner also mentioned a recent planning application for solar panels on a large building in Marston Trading Estate. Matt acknowledged the potential for solar generation on large rooftops and planned to map and reach out to those buildings.</p> <p>Mel Usher shared a personal experience of difficulty in getting retrofit advice and suggested a need for more guidance and support for homeowners. Fiona Barrows and Matt discussed the importance of understanding and addressing the blocks in the retrofit process and providing targeted support to homeowners.</p> | |
| 2024/102/FC | <p>7. For information – Badgers Hill update</p> <p>Peter Wheelhouse confirmed the improvement project had started. The AGM would be held on 10 December at Frome Town Hall. Peter was encouraged by the number of nominations for the board.</p> | |
| 2024/103/FC | <p>The next meeting will be at 7pm on Wednesday 15 January 2025, Frome Town Hall and Zoom</p> | |

The chair closed the public meeting at: 9.03pm

