

Agenda item 5

For decision - Business Case for a Facilities Manager (4 days/30 hrs @ week)

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1. Summary

Frome Town Council is growing its property responsibilities. We are now owner occupier, tenant and landlord for many buildings around the town. And, as the devolution programme progresses, our property portfolio and associated responsibilities are increasing. Currently, the maintenance, health and safety, procurement, and cleaning management of these facilities are dispersed across various staff roles, leading to overwhelm in some areas, inefficiencies and potential compliance risks.

This proposal recommends the recruitment of a part-time Facilities Manager. The post will be responsible for building management across the estate, ensuring consistent maintenance standards, health and safety compliance, and streamlined procurement and supplier/contract management. This role will also undertake tenant liaison and negotiation of leases, and the coordination of cleaning services. It will be responsible for managing the delegated maintenance budgets.

As this post will be a management team member, Standing Orders says such changes must be approved by Council, not by Oversight Committee. When we built the 2025-26 budget during the Autumn, many aspects of the devolution deal were still unknown. We had not yet decided to take on the Key Centre or the open spaces depot and did not know the state of those buildings, which we now do. And we were not aware of the time-consuming nature and complexity of taking on the Market Yard Toilets. We are now in a much clearer position.

As a result, while we initially budgeted for a half-time (18.5 hrs) post, we now feel that this will be insufficient and propose that a post of 30 hrs (4 days) is needed.

The additional cost in 2025/26 of increasing from the post from 18.5 hrs to 30 hrs a week but starting later than budgeted for in the year (say 1st June start) is £17k. We propose to fund this from surpluses already arising in the 2025/26 salary budget from the later than budgeted recruitment of the Planning Officer, HR/Business Asst, and two new Rangers.

2. Objectives of facilities management

Building Maintenance & Upkeep: Ensure all properties are maintained to a high standard, within a planned budget, reducing long-term repair costs and preserving the value of Council assets.

Health and Safety Compliance: Review where already in place, implement and monitor health and safety policies across all buildings, ensuring full compliance with relevant legislation.

Efficient Procurement Processes: Working within FTC's procurement processes, streamlining where possible the procurement for works, contractors, consumables and suppliers, ensuring consistent, cost-effective and high-quality services.

Cleaning Team Management: Coordinate and manage cleaning teams across all facilities to maintain hygiene and presentation standards.

Legal agreements: Work with the Business Manager in managing legal agreements across the estate regarding services, trusteeship, occupation, tenancies and hires

3. Scope of Responsibility

The proposed Facilities Manager will be responsible for Maintenance of buildings, Health & Safety, Cleaning & Procurement, involving regular inspections, preventative maintenance schedules, managing repairs and contracts across.

Maintenance of buildings:

- Town Hall
- Key Centre
- Market Yard Toilet block and adjacent hard open spaces
- The Loop de Loop building housing Frome's Community Friday and Lunghi Babas
- Badgers Hill Stadium – currently on a long lease to the Frome Town CBS so only so far as freeholder responsibilities required
- Cheese & Grain venue – on a lease to the C&G CIC so only in so far as long leaseholder responsibilities required
- Rangers Yard in Victoria Park & the Rangers Depot on Marston Estate
- Victoria Park's Bowling Pavilion and Green - leased to Frome Town Bowling Club so only in so far as freeholders responsibilities required
- Victoria Park's Café - leased to Cultivating Communities so only in so far as freeholders responsibilities required
- Any additional buildings or facilities added to FTC's estate

Health and Safety Compliance:

- Developing, implementing, and monitoring health and safety policies.
- Conducting risk assessments and ensuring statutory compliance.
- Coordinating safety audits and training for staff.

Procurement & Supplier Management:

- Sourcing and managing contractors and suppliers.
- Ensuring cost-effectiveness and quality standards.
- Overseeing contracts for maintenance, cleaning, and other facility-related services.

Cleaning Team Coordination:

- Managing cleaning schedules and standards for all properties.
- Supervising in-house or outsourced cleaning staff.

4. Justification

Asset Preservation and Cost Efficiency:

- Centralised management of maintenance schedules and repairs will prevent costly emergency repairs and extend the lifespan of assets.
- Efficient procurement processes will reduce costs through strategic supplier management and contract negotiation.

Health and Safety Compliance:

- A dedicated Facilities Manager will ensure the Council's estate meets all legal health and safety requirements, minimising risk and liability.

Operational Efficiency and Productivity:

- Streamlined management of cleaning services and maintenance operations will enhance operational efficiency.
- Various staff currently covering facilities management across the estate will be able to focus on core responsibilities, leading to increased productivity.

Community and Stakeholder Satisfaction:

- Well-maintained, safe, and clean facilities will enhance community satisfaction and support the Council's reputation.
- Ensures that leased facilities (Bowling Pavilion, Café, C&G and Badgers Hill) meet high standards, fostering positive relationships with lessees.

5. Financial Implications

- Council agreed in January an indicative budget for this post on half-time hours, subject to approval of this business case, at £27k including on-costs of employers national insurance and pension contributions. The proposed post at 30 hrs will be £44k, a £17k difference which can be supported by flexibility elsewhere in the 2025/26 salaries budget.
- **Estimated Salary and Benefits:** Grade 7 SCP 30 – 34 £39,513 - £43,6993 (2024/25 pay scale, cost to FTC 2025/26 rates TBC but revised budget = £44k incl on-costs)
- **Cost Savings and return on investment (ROI):**
 - Reduction in emergency repair costs.
 - Improved contract negotiation and revision of our approved suppliers list leading to supplier cost savings.
 - Potential revenue enhancement from improved facility appeal and increased community usage.

6. Implementation Plan

- **Recruitment and Onboarding:**
 - This post will become a key member of the management team as shown by the [organisation chart at Appendix 5.1 which can be viewed on the website here.](#)

- Recruit a qualified Facilities Manager with relevant experience in property management and/or support training to Workplace and Facilities Management (IWFM) Level 5.
- Onboarding and training to be completed within the first 6 months.
- **Operational Integration:**
 - Centralise all facility-related contracts under the Facilities Manager.
 - Develop standard operating procedures (SOPs) for maintenance, health and safety, and cleaning management.
- **Performance Monitoring and Evaluation:**
 - Establish KPIs for maintenance efficiency, health and safety compliance, and cost management.
 - Regular performance reviews and community feedback mechanisms.

7. Risks and Mitigation

- **Budget Constraints:**
 - Justify expenditure through projected cost savings and enhanced operational efficiency.
- **Transition Challenges:**
 - Ensure smooth transition with clear communication to existing staff and stakeholders.
 - Gradual integration of responsibilities to minimise disruption.

8. Conclusion

A 30 hour/week Facilities Manager will provide Frome Town Council with a legislatively compliant, professional and efficient approach to property management, ensuring high standards of maintenance, safety, and operational efficiency. This role is essential for safeguarding Council assets, achieving cost efficiencies, enhancing community satisfaction and managing the risks of non-compliance.

Recommendation

Delegate to the Business Manager to recruit a 30 hour per week Facilities Manager.