

Minutes of a meeting of the Oversight Committee

Wednesday 29 January 2025, 7pm
Frome Town Hall and Zoom

Present:

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

In attendance:

Tom Spencer (Terrestrial), Rachel Griffin (Marketing and Communications Manager), Peter Wheelhouse (Deputy Town Clerk, online), Sarah Williams (Business Manager, online), Nikki Cox (Partnership Lead), Rob Holden (Environment Manager), Laura Flaherty (Executive Assistant to the Town Clerk and Mayor), Becca Evans (Business Administrator), Lucy McMahon (Lead Marketing and Communications Officer)

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

1 member of the public was in attendance on Zoom

To watch the discussion in full visit: www.youtube.com/watch?v=Hwmj24TzkSU

Minute Ref	Agenda Item	Action
2025/01/OS	<p>The meeting started at 7pm</p> <p>1a. Apologies for absence None was received.</p> <p>1b. Declaration of members' interests Anne Hills and Andy Jones declared an other registrable interest in agenda item 3.</p> <p>1c. Minutes from the last meeting on 11 December 2024 The minutes of the Oversight Committee meeting held on 11 December 2024 were approved as a true record of the meeting and signed by the Chair.</p> <p>Proposed by Steve Tanner, seconded by Fiona Barrows, agreed unanimously.</p>	
2025/02/OS	<p>2. Questions and comments</p> <p>None was received.</p>	
2025/03/OS	<p>3. For decision – approval to apply for a grant to the Somerset Association of Local Councils' Health and Wellbeing fund</p>	

	<p>Tom Spencer from Terrestrial presented a proposal for FTC to apply to SALC for a grant of £35k for a project called: "Adventures in Your Neighbourhood," a programme of community festivals. The proposal aimed to highlight local stories and engage various sectors of the community, including young people, vulnerable groups, and older adults. The proposal included using local venues where artists work with small communities, such as a few streets, to create memorable community events. He highlighted how this project supported delivery of a range of FTC's objectives, including building communities at the local level, particularly around open spaces, and play, and at places such the Key Centre and Badgers Hill.</p> <p>If the application were successful and Terrestrial were commissioned to deliver it, he would be using that to match fund applications to the Arts Council, for example.</p> <p>Nikki Cox noted that there may be a contribution needed to match fund the grant and this was likely to be in kind. The amount would depend on the grant amount received. She noted there was a small children and young people budget that could also be utilised if need be.</p> <p>The recommendations were to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Approve an application to the SALC Health and Wellbeing fund 2. Delegate authority to the Partnership Lead to submit a collaborative bid with Terrestrial to SALC for £35k in February 2025. <p>Proposed by Nick Dove, seconded by Steve Tanner, agreed unanimously.</p>	NC
2025/04/OS	<p>4. For decision – A course of action to control weeds and litter in the town centre</p> <p>Rob Holden gave a summary of the report and presented the four options for managing weeds in the town centre which were to continue as is, use herbicide, use the Foam Stream device, or purchase a street sweeper.</p> <p>Rob explained the pros and cons of each option, including cost, effectiveness, and environmental impact.</p> <p>Rob's recommendation was to purchase a street sweeper as it was the most effective and practical option for the town centre. Cllrs discussed the potential for hiring out the street sweeper to other councils and the need for additional attachments for hedge cutting and other tasks.</p> <p>The recommendations were:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Purchase a Euromec City Ranger CR2260 Steet Sweeper at a cost of £64,220 with a view to undertaking a fortnightly street clean of the town centre that in time will control weed growth. 	RH

	<p>2. The funding for the capital purchase will come from £25k from the 2025/26 budget for improved street cleansing (600-7962) and £40k from the remaining Saxonvale budget (EMR 356).</p> <p>3. The running costs of approx. £7.1k in year one would come from the town centre budget (600-7969) and in future would form part of the annual Town Centre expenses budget reviewed annually by council</p> <p>Proposed by Nick Dove, seconded by Ben Still, agreed unanimously.</p>	<p>SW</p> <p>SW</p>
2025/05/OS	<p>5. For decision - Marketing and Communications Events</p> <p>Rachel Griffin outlined FTC's events and marketing strategy, emphasising the importance of community engagement and collaboration. Lucy McMahon presented a roundup of annual FTC hosted events. She highlighted upcoming events including the Donate It Tech Amnesty, Wassail, International Women's Day, Window Wanderland, and the Kindness Festival.</p> <p>Rachel then highlighted the proposed events for the next year which included the Cobble Wobble, Great Big Green Week, Refugee Week, Frome Festival, the Catherine Hill Climb, and the Christmas Lights event. Some events are run by FTC while others require some marketing support or for FTC to submit a road closure application.</p> <p>Cllrs discussed the need for better coordination and support for small events and the potential for seed funding new, innovative events.</p> <p>Steve Tanner raised concerns about the welfare of young participants in the Remembrance Day Parade. Rachel acknowledged this and noted ongoing efforts to improve the event's safety and logistics.</p> <p>Fiona Barrows suggested considering an expression of interest for new, innovative events to bring fresh ideas and energy to the town centre.</p> <p>Andy Jones emphasised the importance of managing FTC's capacity and not overstressing with additional events to those already planned.</p> <p>Rachel noted that FTC was successful in its application for a £42k grant to Rural England Prosperity Fund which enabled enhancement of the Discover Frome website and of the Town Centre.</p> <p>The recommendations were:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Note the up-coming events up until the end of this financial year 2. Agree the programme of events as set out in the table above for the upcoming year 3. Agree to the Marketing and Communications team to continue to work with event organisers to support new events into the town centre as they arise. 	<p>RG</p>

	Proposed by Anne Hills, seconded by Fiona Barrows, agreed unanimously.	
2025/06/OS	<p>6. For decision – Business case for Town Centre Co-ordinator</p> <p>Peter Wheelhouse introduced the business case for a Town Centre Co Ordinator, highlighting the need for a dedicated officer to address town centre issues and opportunities.</p> <p>The recommendations were:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Approve the recruitment of a permanent Town Centre Coordinator working 3 days per week on an expected starting salary of SCP21 (£32k pro rata) subject to job evaluation 2. Delegate authority to the Executive Assistant to undertake a job evaluation exercise to determine the final salary level 3. Delegate to the Deputy Town Clerk to draft the job description and to recruit the post as soon as possible. <p>Proposed by Steve Tanner, seconded by Anne Hills, agreed by majority. Fiona Barrows abstained.</p>	<p>LF</p> <p>PWh</p>
2025/07/OS	<p>7. For information - Work Programme progress report for Town Hall</p> <p>A summary of the report was given by Rachel Griffin.</p> <p>Rachel noted the maintenance programme, and objectives were all on track. She was now focusing on additional improvements.</p>	
2025/08/OS	<p>8. For decision - Finance report to Oversight Committee to 31 December 2024</p> <p>Cllrs noted the report.</p> <p>The recommendations were:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Approve Appendix 8.1 the Income & Expenditure report at 31 December 2024 2. Approve Appendix 8.2 the Balance Sheet at 31 December 2024 and Earmarked Reserves at 31 December 2024 3. Approve Appendix 8.3 the payments over £100 October to December 2024 <p>Proposed by Anne Hills, seconded by Ben Still, agreed unanimously.</p>	
2025/09/OS	<p>9. For decision - Approval of internal audit report, reappointment of Internal Auditor, statement of internal controls and disposal of assets</p> <p>Cllrs noted the report.</p>	

	<p>Sarah Williams noted that she and Hannah would endeavour to employ all the auditors recommendations but is discussing with the Information Commissioner's Office where we have to report on payments over £100, for example.</p> <p>The recommendations were:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Approve the internal audit report for the internal audit conducted on 19 December 2024. 2. Approve the reappointment of Kevin Rose, IAC Audit and Consultancy Ltd as our internal auditor for 2025/26 3. Review and approve the Statement of Internal Control 4. Approve the disposal of assets in the table above 5. To ratify the disposal of Transit van (HJ56 ZNN) <p>Proposed by Andy Jones, seconded by Nick Dove, agreed unanimously.</p>	
2025/10/OS	<p>10. For decision – Update to the Safeguarding Policy 2025</p> <p>Cllrs noted the report.</p> <p>Laura Flaherty noted that the communities team were currently reviewing the offer of safeguarding training to community groups.</p> <p>The recommendation was to approve the update to Chapter 21 Child and Adult at Risk of Harm Protection Policy for 2025.</p> <p>Proposed by Nick Dove, seconded by Anne Hills, agreed unanimously.</p>	
2025/11/OS	<p>11. For decision – updated Bullying and Harassment Policy</p> <p>There was a brief discussion about the policy extending to Cllrs. Laura Flaherty noted that the policy was an important duty of FTC as an employer. Bullying and harassment by and between Cllrs was covered in the constitution chapter, Cllrs code of conduct.</p> <p>The recommendations were:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Approve the updated Bullying and Harassment Policy 2. Delegate to the Executive Assistant to the Town Clerk and Mayor to insert this policy into Chapter 4 – Staff Handbook 3. Delegate to the Executive Assistant to the Town Clerk and Mayor to ensure the policy is shared with all staff and Cllrs <p>Proposed by Anne Hills, seconded by Nick Dove, agreed unanimously.</p>	LF
2025/12/OS	<p>12. For decision - Approval of Risk Register 2024/25</p>	

	<p>Cllrs noted the report.</p> <p>The recommendation was to instruct the Chair to sign the 2024/25 Risk Register on behalf of the Council and approve the 2024/25 Risk Management Strategy.</p> <p>Proposed by Andy Jones, seconded by Steve Tanner, agreed unanimously.</p>	
2025/13/OS	<p>13. For information – Planned items for Oversight Committee agendas for the remainder of 2024/25 and upcoming meetings for 2025/26</p> <p>Cllrs discussed the report and noted the upcoming items for the next year,</p>	
2025/14/OS	<p>The next meeting will be at 7pm on Wednesday 19 March 2025, Frome Town Hall and Zoom</p>	

The Chair closed the meeting at 9.02pm