

Frodsham Town Council
Minutes of the meeting of
Frodsham Town Council



Held on Thursday 2 July 2015 at 7.30pm
In Castle Park House, Castle Park, Frodsham

Meeting 4

Present: Cllrs Warren (Chair), Wakefield, Collins-Doyle, Pennington, Reynolds, Martin, Poulton, Jones, Oulton, Jon Wild (Town Clerk), Anne Scriven (Office Manager) and around 15 members of the public, and one member of the press.

Before the meeting proper there was a briefing by Cheshire Police (ACC Mark Roberts and Inspector Paul Loughlin on new police briefing arrangements for Frodsham. This was open to the public, and the police remained behind during the meeting proper to take any questions from the public. See Annex A for a summary of the briefing.

Item	Action/Decision/Notes/ Recommendations
47 Apologies for Absence	Cllrs Sutton, Knowles, Fraser, Ashton, Pusey, Brown.
48 Declaration of Interests	Cllrs Pennington and Wakefield re London Road allotments. Cllr Reynolds re Item 55, Complaint. Cllr Oulton re Townfield Lane (Item 53)
49 Minutes of Meeting No.2 held on 8 June 2015	
a. Acceptance and signing	Accepted and to be signed as a true and accurate record of the meeting, following an adjustment: Clerk to include specific reference to the request from the WW1 Working Group to speak to stakeholders direct on matters to do with their work. Action: Clerk (Clerk's note: done)
b. Matters Arising	None
50 Minutes of Extraordinary Meeting No. 3 held 16 June 2015	
a. Acceptance and signing	Accepted and signed as a true and accurate record of the meeting,
b. Matters arising	None
51 Public Speaking Time /Reports from Public Bodies (Inc. FTC Response)	Mr. Dillon said he had attended many FTC meetings, but was becoming disillusioned. He was concerned about what he had heard about potential proposals for an Executive Committee, perhaps of only 3 or 4 councillors. He felt this was undemocratic. He also thought two councillors were not being told about meetings (Clerk's note: all councillors are informed of meeting dates – including those who choose not to use email). He said he felt the Council was corrupt and meetings were boring. That is why people did not come. He felt this evening's meeting had been called in such a way as to get no public attendance (Clerk's note: policy and legal requirements were adhered to in the calling of the meeting). He did not like Part B items. He felt the people of Frodsham wanted action now, not in "five years". In response the Chair thanked Mr. Dillon for his comments. He reminded him that all votes in the Council were equal, that every Councillor had the right to speak, and that the public were also encouraged to speak – which did not happen in all councils. Part B was necessary at times to protect confidential matters. Any business would need to do the same sometimes. He was sorry to hear Mr. Dillon refer to the Council as "bent", given that he had not himself (Mr. Dillon) chosen to stand for election.

Item	Action/Decision/Notes/ Recommendations
	<p>Cllr Reynolds said he did not regard the Council as corrupt – he said the Council had “high falutin” ideas – he would rather clear a gully than build a new crossing. He said that there had been a mistake with the timing of the police visit earlier, with police officers attending the evening before (Clerk’s note: communications with the police, backed up by email, show that there was no such error made in the FTC office).</p>
52	<p>Reports from Council and Urgent Local Issues (see annex 1)</p>
A	<p>Members/Chairman’s/Mayors Items</p> <p>There was no Mayor’s Report; and Chairman’s items would be covered elsewhere.</p> <p>Members</p> <p>Town Carnival: Cllr Poulton introduced the idea of Frodsham having its own Carnival. This would not be an attempt to hijack other events but rather an umbrella under which other events could take place. He saw this as a way of harnessing pride and enthusiasm in the town. Drawing on his own background in marketing (involvement in events such as Manchester Pride and the Miss World pageant), Cllr Poulton said that such an idea, whilst ambitious, was achievable. The Carnival could include a Mayor’s Parade. Date and time remained to be agreed, but should perhaps be during term time. Sponsorship was a real possibility, and enquiries were being made. He thanked Judith Critchley and Kate Dodgson for their help so far.</p> <p>The idea was warmly received. There would be a lot of work – enough people would be needed to spread the work. It would make sense to fully involve other organisations in the town such as ‘Love Frodsham’. Anyone interested in getting involved should make contact with Cllr Poulton. Cllrs who immediately registered an interest were Cllrs Wakefield, Collins-Doyle, Martin and Jones.</p> <p><i>Council approved the request from the CWAC representatives to speak at this point.</i></p> <p>They reported that things were beginning to settle down after the election, though this had meant a pause at CWAC, while the new administration bedded in.</p> <p>They were keen to keep open the dialogue with FTC at its meetings – they asked whether a half hour briefing session before the main meeting might be the way forward in future? CWAC was pleased to have won the award as Best Achieving Council. It had been kept off the top slot as Best Council by Glasgow.</p> <p>They reported on some new ideas: Bright Lives was an initiative to help isolated people, Other ideas revolved around accidents involving young drivers and veterans’ issues. How could FTC and CWAC mesh its ideas so that, for example, we did not fail to mark Armed Forces Week again?</p> <p>They were interested to hear that FTC wanted to put up a new Flag Pole in Castle Park House. They were pleased to see FTC representation at the Castle Park House Trustees meetings. They said that FTC had a major part to play in deciding what role it wanted in the management of the house.</p> <p>The Chairman said that he saw these as opportunities for partnership working. FTC meetings might not always be the best places for these discussions. He mentioned the need for a meeting on car parking with all interested parties.</p>

Item	Action/Decision/Notes/ Recommendations
	<p>The Peel development was now a construction site. The Liaison Panel was being constituted. Cllr Dawson's view was that one vote per town/village was unfair to Frodsham, given its size. Cllr Knowles was the FTC representative on the panel. Perhaps the Council should be arguing for a weighted vote?</p> <p>Cllr Reynolds thanked CWAC's Cllr Riley for her help on mental health issues during his time as a Volunteer Advocate. In return, Cllr Riley praised the work that Cllr Reynolds had done.</p>
B Clerk's Items	<p>The Clerk reported on the raising of the Union flag in memory of those killed in Tunisia and thanks were given to the Frodsham Fire Brigade for their assistance.</p> <p>The Clerk asked Council to agree a payment of £36 to renew membership of CPRE – agreed.</p>
C Committees	
1 Community Committee – 09.06.15	<p>R1: A budget of £30-50 should be agreed to purchase additional bulbs (daffodils, snowdrops and crocuses). – agreed.</p> <p>R2: Open Ship Street Field as an official dog walking area, with bins and signage, until its future is agreed – not agreed.</p> <p>Cllr Poulson's advice from CWAC was that reopening would not affect its (CWAC's) attitude to sale, or the price it would charge and it would be popular.</p> <p>Cllr Pennington said that s164 of the Public Health Act 1875, under which we had a byelaw prohibiting dogs, applied. We had seldom applied it so far, but a discussion with CWAC might be needed before any further decisions were made.</p> <p>R3: To join CPFA and pay the subscription of £22 – agreed.</p> <p>R4: To recognised the Christmas Festival Committee as a sub-Committee of the Community Committee and give officer support of three hours per month. – Not agreed.</p> <p>The Christmas Festival Committee was not currently a FTC committee at all. As there was no-one from the Committee to describe their thinking on this, the Clerk would research further and report back if necessary.</p> <p>R5: To approve the lowest quotation of £803 plus VAT for the painting of the benches.</p> <p>Agreed on the basis that the quote covered most if not all of our benches.</p>
2 Environment Committee – 23.06.15	<p>Cllr Oulton reported that a relatively newly-planted tulip tree had fallen over in Castle Park. CWAC were considering replacement. A feeding station for squirrels in the park had been suggested. The Committee was concerned that this might worsen the problem rather than improve it.</p> <p>Work on the path alongside Ship Street was needed. The Clerk had already commissioned this work, as there were Health and Safety considerations.</p> <p>A proposal would come to FTC in due course as to whether it should acquire a van. The Facilities Manager using his own car was far from ideal. It was noted that speaking to CWAC about their transport solutions might be helpful. Part of any decision would be an analysis of the Facilities Manager's mileage records.</p> <p>Access to Hob Hey Wood was briefly discussed. It was noted that, while access round the wood via Boardwalk, was good –</p>

Item	Action/Decision/Notes/ Recommendations
	<p>access to the wood was less so.</p> <p>R1: That FTC continues with the purchase of the piece of track leading up to new land at Hob Hey Wood and notifies the solicitor to proceed – agreed, though it was noted that there was an extant resolution on this from some time ago but Council did wish the purchase to proceed.</p> <p>R2: That FTC pay the Mid-Cheshire Footpath Society membership fee of £8 – agreed.</p>
D	Working Groups
1	<p>WW1</p> <p>EP1: Expenditure of £15 for printing of tickets for the performance of Bullets and Daffodils – noted.</p> <p><i>(Cllr Wakefield left at this point)</i></p>
2	<p>Dog Fouling</p> <p>Cllr Martin and the Group had produced a plan for the work. This was in two phases – broadly, awareness training and action. Cllr Martin said that sponsorship might well be available – including from CWAC – for this work. This might, for example, pay for literature.</p> <p>A question was raised about companies from outside Frodsham taking large numbers of dogs for walks on our land. Cllr Pennington said that he had seen up to 17 dogs at a time. They were not “picking up”; unlike Frodsham residents who he said were doing so. The PCSO had been informed.</p>
53	Asset Management
A	<p>Churchfields</p> <p>Work was at last about to begin. The Clerk had prepared a letter advising local residents that there would be some inevitable disruption over the next few weeks, and asking for their help while the work was completed. Only part of these would be closed, but the plans DID include the closure, over this period, of the existing play area.</p> <p>Some Cllrs felt that the work should be delayed until after the summer holiday though this would inevitably mean further lengthy delays adding to the already lengthy delays that had taken place. Ground conditions were best over the summer for speedy and effective work.</p>
B	<p>Ship Street</p> <p>The Chair recommended that a sharp letter be sent from the Council to CWAC to elicit an offer on release of the covenant, following the exploratory meeting some months back.</p>
C	<p>Townfield Lane</p> <p>Few comments had been received, none substantial, on the outline presales that had been circulated.</p> <p>Council agreed no further work on sites beyond Churchfields would be commissioned until the Play Strategy had been revisited in the light of all possible information on all sites.</p>
D	<p>London Road Allotments</p> <p>In view of land conditions found by the contractors, there would be additional costs to finishing this work. The plan was to set up rock-filled gabion baskets. Prices were awaited, but to keep the work moving, it was possible an extraordinary meeting would be needed to review the quotes.</p>
E	<p>Cemetery Land Purchase</p> <p>In the absence of Cllr Pusey, to be carried forward.</p>
54	Strategy/Management
A	<p>Council Communications</p> <p>Cllr Warren mentioned that there had been some complaints</p>

Item		Action/Decision/Notes/ Recommendations
		made by members of the public about communications from Councillors. The Chairman was minded to ask CHALC to investigate. See 55 below.
B	Committee Structures	Many new types of members had begun to attend committee meetings. This was useful, but it was felt that the Council should return to the discussion at a future meeting, once greater experience had been had by all. There were probably ways we could operate more effectively – the example of small payments was suggested as one. Much was discussed about setting the right parameters. It was important that mechanisms were set up to save time. The conversation would be more constructive when more members were present.
C	Potential FTC contribution to highway improvements	See earlier briefing session from John Baron (Annex)
55	Complaint	A series of complaints had been received externally pertaining to the Code of Conduct. In the absence of a Policy & Process Chair, the complaints had initially been passed to Cllr Warren. Although informal resolution would be sought in the first instance, if this was unsuccessful, the matter would be handled by a Cllr in an adjacent Parish.
56	Finance Management 01.5.15 – 31.5.15	
A	Paid Expenditure	Noted
B	Received Income	Noted
C	Bank Reconciliation	Noted
57	Items for next agenda	Cllrs were invited to bring forward items to the Clerk.
58	Date of Next Meeting	Dates for the year were set before the current Council was elected. Due to work and other Cllr commitments it seemed as though the July date would be problematic. Clerk asked to look for an alternative date – with an initial suggestion of 30 July. Action: Clerk
PART B		
59	London Road Allotments	See above
60	Cemetery land Purchase	See above
61	Complaint	Council resolved that an internal complaint received would be handled externally. Initially, CWaC and CHaLC would be approached.

Meeting closed at 10pm

Signed: _____
Jon Wild, Town Clerk

Date: _____

Town Clerk: Mr. Jon Wild
Frodsham Town Council, Castle Park, Frodsham WA6 6SB

Tel: 01928 735150 Email: council@frodsham.gov.uk Website: www.frodsham.gov.uk

Annex A

Briefing from Cheshire Police For Councillors and the Public

2 July 2015

Inspector Paul Loughlin had recently taken responsibility for the area that included Frodsham. He introduced the members of his team who were present – Mark Roberts, Assistant Chief Constable, Police Officer, Sharon Beverley and Frodsham PCSO Neil Flanagan.

ACC Roberts said that there was good news on the crime statistics front, with crime labels at a 25 year-low. Cheshire was the safest place in the country, and had seen a dramatic drop in victim-based crime. Response times were also good – with 90% of 999 calls responded to within 15 minutes.

Using an intelligence-led approach to policing had enabled this to happen against the background of high cost savings - £37m out of £190m saved so far, with a further £30m to be saved this year.

The intention was to replace existing Neighbourhood Policing Units with 8 Local Police Units. This, along with thinning out management layers, should allow the force to keep as many as 220 PCSOs that might otherwise be at risk. In future, officers on the beat, once briefed, would stay on the beat rather than returning to the station. Electronic communication would make this possible.

While beat briefings would take place in Blacon each morning, there were no plans to close Frodsham station: it was just that briefings would not take place there.

There would be a need for officers to travel to Frodsham after briefing, but this spending on travelling time along with back office savings would ensure that PCSOs were not lost. Ellesmere Port it was pointed out, used this model successfully already.

There was then time for questions and comments from Cllrs and the public.

- Would police officer training still take place in Frodsham? This was seen as a positive thing by residents. The officers noted this and felt it seemed likely to continue.
- The question of arrests of people with mental health problems was discussed. The system of having a mental health professional present at arrest (with attendant access to mental health records) was seen as a positive thing.
- It was good to hear that stations would not be closed. What about the travelling time from Blacon? It was recognised that this would be lost time, but would result in the saving of resources for the beat. The station at Frodsham would remain there to be used. There were no plans to dispose of it.
- Could the Council help with providing a Community Police base? Communications between the Council and PCSO were good, and the Council now had Castle Park House.
- There was a high level of praise for PCSO Flanagan generally, particular his good connections with the schools.
- It was asked whether the help desk, presently open 10.00 – 2.0PM would go. There would in future not be anyone present at the station during those hours, but there would be a means of calling someone.
- It was asked if there were enough police cars (2 cars for 9 officers). It was recognised by officers that there would be additional travel time. But they were planning to review the new arrangements in six months. If a better way of organising things came to light, they were open to it.
- It was recognised that, if cuts had to be made, it was good that the visibility of our PCSO was not to be reduced.
- There were seen to be hazards by some members of the public – when there were M56 problems for example, this was a big area over which to drop off officers in the morning. Some would walk, some would use bikes, but it could make them less able to cover their beats. Signage would need to change to reflect new practice at the station.

The Chairman thanked officers for their attendance. The agenda was then reordered by agreement of the Council to allow Jamie Baron of CWAC Highways to speak next (Item 54C from the Agenda)

The Chairman said that FTC had begun to play a role in key developments around our highways – widening cycle paths and contributing financially to schemes for new crossings. The recent survey had shown public support for improvements. Perhaps the next one being a crossing on Church Street?

Mr. Barron explained the formula that was used to determine the placing of crossings. This referenced volume of traffic and foot traffic, in deciding what type of crossing was desirable if any, at a particular location. Factors such as proximity of traffic lights etc. also played a part. As did limited funding, which was why the help of FTC was so appreciated?

Potholes remained a big problem. Again criteria applied, as to whether they should be filled temporarily or otherwise. Safety inspections were carried out. The priority was to not have to continually refill them. But if anyone was aware of any potholes or other similar issues, PLEASE report them to CWAC. Officers were electronically connected in communications terms and could often get to a site very quickly. They could assess risks and priorities - carrying out preventative work sometimes, before a pothole became a major problem.

Problems with gridlock during problems on the M56 were mentioned. There were also some pollution pinch points due to traffic, and some streets where pedestrian areas were inadequate or non-existent. These type of issues was dealt with “strategic” colleagues back at CWAC, and Mr. Baron could refer those on. Knowing about issues was the main thing – problems could be avoided by timely resealing of surfaces, etc.

One Cllr was concerned that FTC paying towards such work was in effect “paying twice”. The Chairman said that this was a matter the new Council would need to take a view on.

The Netherton lights seemed not to be working – Mr Barron would report this.

There was concern about potholes on Ship Street/ Ashton Drive. Mr Baron explained that CWAC did try to assess why they occurred, and to look at the bigger picture, including traffic volume, drainage etc. He expressed willingness to come and look at any areas where there were participant concerns locally.

The Chairman thanked him for his contribution.