

Frodsham Town Council



**Minutes of the meeting of
Frodsham Town Council
held on Tuesday 27 May 2014 following the Annual Meeting
In the Lounge, Frodsham Community Centre, Frodsham**

Meeting 2

Present: Cllrs Warren (Chair), Oulton, Wales, Dawson, Riley, Taylor, Sutton, Bondi, Brown, Pusey, Redhead and Shearn, and Wakefield, Jon Wild (Town Clerk) and Anne Scriven (Office Manager), 1 member of the press and around 5 members of the public.

The personal interests of Cllr S L Riley & Cllr a W Dawson on this agenda are noted on the basis that they are both elected members of this Council & CWaC. Cllr Dawson is also a member of the Police & Crime Panel. Cllrs Dawson, Riley, & Wakefield are members of Frodsham Foundation.

No	Item	Note/Decision/Action
22	Apologies for Absence	Cllrs Kelly and Pennington
23	Declarations of Interest	<p>Cllr Shearn re Youth Association Cllr Oulton re Friends of John Williamson Cllr Pusey re Sutton Parish Council, and Frodsham Community Association Cllr Wakefield re Frodsham Foundation and London Road allotments. Cllr Redhead re Frodsham Youth Association Cllr Dawson reiterated the interests listed above. Cllr Riley likewise, and also as a Director of Groundwork Cheshire. Cllr Bondi re Frodsham Water Sports.</p>
24	Frodsham Foundation: to receive report if available	<p>Cllr Wakefield reported. Since it was just a few days since the Foundation's last update, the main thing to report was that a new email newsletter was due the following day.</p> <p>The matter of Cllr Pusey's nomination by FTC as a Director of the Foundation was discussed. Cllr Pusey was concerned that he had received a response from the CEO, requiring a very fast turnaround indeed, asking for further information and assurances relating to his nomination. He asked whether it was right that his Council nomination should be questioned, particularly as he felt he was being made accountable for actions from before his time as a Director.</p> <p>The Chair confirmed that Cllr Pusey was the council's nominated representative, though he drew a parallel with School Governors where acceptance criteria existed, and acceptance by the school was more than a rubber stamp.</p> <p>Cllr Dawson as an existing Foundation Director said that the process for becoming a Director was still being put in place by the Chair and CEO. It might be that existing members, ex officio or not, might need to go through a similar process. He was in favour of having more directors, and supported the candidacy of Cllr Pusey. But he stressed that when joining the board of a separate entity such as the Foundation, it was essential that the individual put the interests of that entity first.</p> <p>He felt however that the process for Cllr Pusey should have been made clearer, and that the timescale for response had been too short. He offered the Foundation's apology for this.</p> <p>Cllr Pusey indicated that he had volunteered to attend the next Foundation meeting to clear up any remaining issues. The Chair and other councillors thought this was a good way to resolve.</p>

25	Local Police: To receive report (if PC/PCSO is available)	<p>In the absence of PCSO Neil Flanagan, a written report had been circulated before the meeting.</p> <p>Cllr Riley provided a brief update on the dog fouling issue that had come up previously. She was working closely with BCU Commander to arrange teaming and accreditation for the PCSO, allowing him to issue penalties for dog related matters. Frodsham was piloting a new approach, and progress was expected quickly.</p>
26	Requests from the Public to Speak	<p>A member of the public complained about the present condition of the cut grass in the town.</p> <p>The Clerk explained that a new contract had very recently begun, and as usual this had coincided with a period of rapid grass growth. It would take some time to bed down, and was receiving attention.</p>
27	Minutes of Meeting 14, 28 April 2014	<p>Item 295 – Local Plan – Cllr Bondi questioned the accuracy of information provided at the previous meeting regarding submission to the Local Plan part 2, particularly pertaining to the green belt submission.</p> <p>It was requested that the North West Football Association name be used in full in item 303.</p> <p>Otherwise agreed as a true and accurate record of the meeting, subject to one minor spelling correction on page 2.</p>
28	Matters Arising	<p>It was requested that the question of Archangel plaques be referred to Community Committee.</p> <p>Action: Clerk</p> <p>296.1 - Cllr Bondi asked about progress on the tree felling at the Water Sports Centre. Cllr Riley confirmed that her enquiries showed that work that had taken place did not impact on any trees with TPOs.</p> <p>290 – Following this, the Clerk now read a letter of apology that had been provided by Cllr Pennington, in the absence of Cllr Pennington from this meeting.</p> <p>The Chair asked Council if they found the letter an acceptable way to resolve the situation. The Chair proposed that, at Cllr Taylor's recommendation, there was a recommendation in the Policy and Process minutes (due for discussion later in this meeting) that could be dealt with here.</p> <p>During discussion the following points were made;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The apology needed to be sincere. In one Councillor's view this was not the case. She felt it was too little too late. One Councillor did not fully understand the apology provided. • It was recognised that the making of the apology would not have been a trivial matter for Cllr Pennington. • There was concern from one Councillor that the apology was not simple and straightforward. For example, it did not cover the reference to WW2, just Hitler. • It was recognised that in a meeting where feelings could run high, it was easy for anyone to misexpress them. A wholehearted apology was appropriate when this happened. It was a shame Cllr Pennington was not present to deliver himself. <p>It was agreed that the Chair would approach Cllr Pennington direct, and relay this feedback to him. This would allow him a further opportunity to put things right. If this was not taken, the recommendation from Policy</p>

		<p>and Process (that Cllr Pennington be removed from Committees and Working Groups) would be considered.</p> <p>Action: Chair</p> <p>The Chair then referred to previous discussion in March, when FTC had discussed social media and Council's involvement in them. In particular a reference had been made to a letter from a member of the public about the conduct of some councillors. The Chair had referred to this letter in the meeting. Since then, one of the Cllrs mentioned in the letter had expressed unhappiness at the way the Chair had handled at the meeting. The Chair said that he was sincerely sorry for this: it had not been his intention to knowingly humiliate a member, while of course holding members to account for their actions. He offered an unreserved apology.</p>
29	CWAC Local Plan	<p>Part Two of the Local Plan was now underway. This was a site specific part of the plan, and included a call for land. The initial call for contributions ended 19 June.</p> <p>Cllr Dawson explained that there was a chance he might chair the next stage of the Plan, and as such he might need to keep a distance from Frodsham's comments.</p> <p>The Clerk was asked to check which councillors wished to be involved in preparing the Council's response to part 2. This group would include the Chair and Cllr Bondi – others would be welcome. A meeting would be needed quickly – dates suggested were 12 and 13 June.</p> <p>The Chair and Cllr Bondi were given delegated powers to respond for FTC, copying in other councillors.</p> <p>Action: Chair/Cllr Bondi</p>
30	Planning	
30.1	Applications dealt with by Planning Committee	Minutes of Meeting dated 07.05.14 were noted.
30.2	Decisions taken by Borough Council	Noted - Cllr Riley reported that the Cholmondeley Arms 'al fresco dining application had been called in.
31	Finance	
31.1	Paid Expenditure – 31.03.14 – 30.04.14	Noted
31.2	Received Income – 31.03.14 – 30.04.14	Noted
31.3	Budget Spend & Bank Reconciliation to 30.04.14	Noted
31.4	Adoption of the Annual Report and Accounts for 2013-14, and Pts. 1 and 2 of the External Audit Report.	<p>The Clerk tabled the Accounts which had been presented in draft at the Town Meeting. These were adopted.</p> <p>He also tabled parts 1 and 2 of the Audit Report, which were agreed and signed by the Chair, and would now be submitted to the External Auditor, via the Internal Auditor.</p> <p>The Clerk confirmed that the period in which members of the public were offered the chance to attend the office and look at the Council's invoices etc. was now underway.</p>
32	Committees	
32.1	Environment – 06.05.14	<p>Marshlands – weed killing work needed to be completed before the grant could be claimed. Clerk to chase progress.</p> <p>Action: Clerk</p> <p><i>EP1: Purchase of 1000 English bluebell bulbs for planting in Marl Pits in the Autumn at a cost of £200 plus VAT was agreed.</i></p> <p><i>EP2: Provide St Laurence's Church with a donation of £50 towards the cost of refreshments and grave markers for the WW1 Heritage walk, held as part of the Frodsham Festival of Walks was agreed.</i></p>

32.2	Community – 12.05.14	<p><i>R1: That the Council set up a lease with the Red Lion Bowling Club for the land in line with legal advice, and that the Clerk should take this forward as soon as possible, keeping the Community Committee informed.</i></p> <p>The Clerk was asked to ensure that advice from the Council’s lawyers on this was in writing. While a lease would provide security, it was a more formal way of firming up present arrangements than a license. In particular, it was essential that proper termination arrangements were in place. A lease might give rise to automatic rights of review.</p> <p>Action: Clerk</p>
32.3	Policy & Process – 16.04.14	<p><i>R1: That FTC approve the Asset Disposal and Acquisition Policy</i> Cllr Taylor explained that this had been updated to reflect latest law and good practice, including some from Staffordshire Council. Agreed.</p> <p><i>R2: That FTC approve the revised Asset Management Policy</i> There was still some fine detail (such as land Registry) numbers to be researched and included, but the policy was now ready for adoption. Agreed.</p> <p><i>R3: That FTC approve the revised Grants Policy</i> This had been revised following earlier council discussion. It allowed the Council to link its grant giving to an event such as had happened at the 2013 ATM, but allowed grants at other times too. Agreed.</p> <p><i>R4: That FTC approves the updated Disaster Recovery Plan.</i> The revisions were mainly loose ends tied up and a change to para 6 to reflect the Council’s use of Cloud computing. Agreed.</p> <p><i>R5: That FTC approves extension of the pilot of tablet computers by one month.</i> It was agreed to extend the pilot in order to get the best picture of tablets’ usefulness. The pilot had been delayed in making an effective start, for technical reasons.</p>
32.4	Policy & Process – 14.05.14	<p><i>R1: That the Council issues no polling cards or reminder letters for the forthcoming election in South Ward, on grounds of cost and time.</i> Last time FTC had used letters instead of cards. Hand delivered, it had been a big task that seemed to have delivered little additional turnout. It was agreed not to use cards this time, but to use alternative media such as Frodsham News to remind people that they did not need poll cards to vote.</p> <p>Action: Clerk</p> <p><i>R2: That FTC agrees the new Standing Orders.</i> Agreed, subject to further minor changes – one being the end for the Clerk to preside over the election of the new Chair at Meeting 1.</p> <p><i>R3: That FTC agrees the new schedule of charges.</i> These were agreed, following earlier discussion at FTC. Some changes had already taken place.</p> <p>Cllr Bondi left the meeting at 10.05PM</p> <p><i>R4: That FTC agrees the slightly revised Code of Conduct.</i> This was referred back to Policy and Process, for further work – including reference to social media in particular. The Chair was keen to see that informal resolution opportunities were exhausted before the formal complaints procedure was activated.</p> <p>Action: Clerk</p>

		<p><i>R5: That FTC agrees the slightly revised Executive Powers methodology.</i> Agreed.</p> <p><i>R6: That FTC agrees the slightly revised Website Links Criteria</i> Agreed.</p> <p><i>R7: That Cllr Pennington is asked to fully and unreservedly apologies in public for the derogatory words he used, failing which he should be removed from all committees and working groups.</i> See earlier discussion at this meeting. Until resolved, this recommendation was deferred.</p> <p>Cllr Taylor had also circulated a document concerning the Neighbourhood Plan. This contained two recommendations, which were dealt with here;</p> <p><i>4.1 – Taking into account the complexity of the project and the cost, time and commitment needed for its success, it is recommended that FTC undertakes an assessment of benefits of a Neighbourhood Plan (NP) compared to other options (e.g. a town plan) and decides whether or not to proceed with a NP.</i></p> <p><i>4.2 If the Council decides in favour of a NP, then it is further recommended that it commissions a formal plan and agrees arrangements for a meeting of interested parties to formally launch the project.</i></p> <p>There was an offer on the table for practical training for the Council. This would cost £130 for one hour. She mentioned that Helsby had engaged a consultant to help them get started. This might be a possible source of advice for us too – there was an argument for linking Frodsham and Helsby’s plans in some way – the Chair would raise informally with the Chair of Helsby when he could.</p> <p>Action: Chair</p> <p>The proposal was made that both recommendations proceed in the meantime. There was some discussion about how right a NP was for Frodsham. They could be costly, and some were receiving legal challenge. The Plan would have to in any event fit with the Local Plan, not yet complete. It was suggested that a NP would have more “teeth” than the present Town Design Statement. A NP gave people control locally, and the referendum required ensured that democratic principles prevailed.</p> <p>Neighbourhood Planning was an evolving landscape, with the days of pioneering towns behind us. Nevertheless there was the scope for learning from those who have gone before, such as Winsford, whose plan had been challenged. Grants were available to help with cost. Professional advice on the way forward was needed.</p> <p>The proposal was agreed.</p>
32.5	<p>World War 1 Commemorative Group 23.4.14</p>	<p><i>R1: Approve expenditure of £3.98 for the purchase of 100 small envelopes to facilitate scattering of poppy seeds at the Castle Park site (retrospective)</i> Agreed.</p> <p>Budget to be delegated to Clerk, at request of the Working Group.</p> <p><i>R2: Approve a grant of £100 to St Laurence Heritage Group to cover printing of a booklet about the 52 service men from Frodsham who gave their lives during WW1 and are buried or remembered in the graveyard of St Laurence Parish Church.</i> Agreed</p>

		<p><i>R3: Consider encouraging existing members of the Group to commit to attending meetings and/or appoint additional members to the Group to enable it to make decisions.</i></p> <p>Agreed</p>
32.6	World War 1 Commemorative Group 21.5.14	<p><i>R1: Approve purchase of 200 poppy crosses @£2.50 each for use at the memorial service at St Laurence's Church on 3 August.</i></p> <p>Agreed</p>
33	Residential Development rear of Dig Lane	<p>The Council had been asked if it wished to offer any alternatives to the proposed name of Fern Meadows.</p> <p>The Council asked the Clerk to resubmit the list of names he had submitted for a previous development, most of which had a WW1 resonance.</p> <p>Action: Clerk</p>
34	CWAC Items	<p><i>Local Plan</i> – see earlier discussion.</p> <p><i>Public toilets</i> – refurbishment completed - no complaints so far.</p> <p><i>Governance Review</i> – full Council discussion would be needed in due course on the results – probably in July.</p> <p>Action: Clerk</p>
35	Councillors Items	
35.1	Frodsham Marshes Wind Farm/Community Benefit Fund	Discussed at AGM (meeting 1)
35.2	Festival in the Park	The Council considered whether to take a stand at the Festival this year. It was noted that CWAC would have stall, looking to recruit volunteers. FTC councillors to share the stall.
35.3	Code of Conduct	<p>Cllr Dawson noted what he saw as the difference between the conduct of councillors at this meeting and the less acceptable way he felt some had behaved at the Town Meeting, where he felt there may have been violations of the Code of Conduct.</p> <p>He felt that councillors needed to show respect for each other and the people they engaged with. They were not free to say what they wanted. There was no place for aggression or for putting forward opinions as fact. It was unacceptable to imply wrong doing by councillors without providing evidence. Councillors should not withhold papers from the Council that could be necessary to its work.</p> <p>His comments had been provided to the Chair of Policy and Process, who would consider changes to the Code at their next meeting.</p> <p>Cllr Pusey made a statement about some comments he had made himself at the Annual Town Meeting. He felt he may have said some things that were misleading.</p> <p>He clarified his view of the position of Cllr Dawson regarding the recommendations of the Governance Review. He recognised that Cllr Dawson had supported the first FULL recommendations. Cllr Pusey had lobbied as a member of Sutton Weaver Council. Other Sutton Councillors, generally unhappy at the Review and its officers had, he felt now unfairly, singled out Cllr Dawson for criticism. He apologised for any implication that Cllr Dawson should not have been involved in the issues as he sat on the Governance Review Committee. He now recognised there was in fact no legal impediment to this. Lastly he felt he should have declared at the ATM that he was a Sutton Weaver Councillor.</p>

		He ended by saying that he was sorry if he had misled anybody, and believed the Council should work together. The Chair thanked both Cllrs for their comments, and was glad that an informal resolution had been achieved.
36	Consultations	<p>FTC had been asked – with other Councils – whether it wanted to be part of a Rural Sounding Board. The Council decided NOT to join this initiative at this time.</p> <p>There was an opportunity for the Council to take a view on an initiative called “You Decide on Punishment of Offenders”. It was suggested that the PCSO be asked to describe in more detail at a future meeting. Clerk to arrange.</p> <p>Action: Clerk</p>
37	Clerk’s Report	<p>The Clerk had received some grant applications, some quite urgent. It was agreed that these be put to Policy and Process in line with the new procedures agreed.</p> <p>Action : Clerk</p>
38	Chairman’s Report	It was intended that future reports would be issued in writing.
39	Mayor’s Report	It was intended that future reports would be issued in writing.
40	Any Other Matters	<p>It was agreed that the request for funding from the Theater in the Quarter Group should be dealt with by the WW1 Group.</p> <p>There was a suggestion that we keep future meetings to the Community Centre, where Wi-Fi would enable tablet use. The Clerk confirmed this was the intended course of action.</p> <p>The suggestion was made that future meetings aim for an earlier finish time.</p>

List 1 Planning Decisions Taken by the Unitary Council			
Reference	Address	Description	Decision
13/05151/FUL	8 Perth Close	Single storey rear extension	PERMIT
14/00640/FUL	16 Orchard Close	Side/rear extension, installation of new roof & ext. terrace	PERMIT
14/00097/FUL	Hill View, Beech Avenue	First floor side extension	PERMIT
14/00549/FUL	110 Bridge Lane	Balustrades to flat roof rear extension	REFUSED
14/00631/LBC	56 Hillside Road	Removal of asbestos sheeting & reinstate thatched roof	APPROVED
14/00752/FUL	Land at Red ways, Red Lane	New dwelling (resubmission 13/05524/FUL)	PERMIT
14/01172/FUL	18 Hill field	Single storey rear ext. & reduce length of existing garage	PERMIT
14/01071/LBC	Bears Paw, Main Street	Into alts & complete ext. redecoration & add fixed seating	PERMIT
13/04979/FUL	Dig Lane Farm, Dig Lane	5 detached dwellings & 1 semidetached (2 affordable)	PERMIT

The meeting closed at 10.45pm

Signed _____

Dated _____

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