Frodsham Town Council



FRODSHAM TOWN COUNCIL AMENITIES COMMITTEE MINUTES FROM THE MEETING HELD 19TH APRIL 2021 VIA ZOOM

Meeting 9

Attended by Committee Members: Cllr P Griffiths (Chair), Cllr R McKeown, Cllr C Ashton, Cllr B Wade, Cllr H Hayes.

Also attended by Cllrs B Stockton and P Lowrie & 2 members of the public.

At the beginning of the meeting it was RESOLVED to move item 135 into a confidential section of the meeting due to the commercially sensitive nature of the item and late availability of the information.

118 Apologies for absence

To receive apologies.

NOTED: There were no apologies for absence.

119 Declarations of interest

To note any declarations of interest on items which are on the agenda.

NOTED: There were declarations of interest on items which are on the agenda.

120 Requests from the public to speak

Members of the public are invited to speak on items which are on the agenda in accordance with FTC policy on public speaking at meetings: https://frodsham.gov.uk/policies-procedures/
https://frodsham.gov.uk/policies-procedures/
NOTED:
There were no requests to speak from members of the public.

121 Replacement trees

To consider a request from Tom Blundell to replace 7 trees in Churchfields, 3 in Hob Hey Wood and 14 in Ship Street orchards. The estimated cost is £12 per tree and £3 per stake.

RESOLVED: Clerk to enquire as to whether funding is available through the Welcome Back Fund administered by Cheshire West and Chester Council. If funding is not available through the Welcome Back Fund administered by Cheshire West and Chester Council to replace 21 trees, it was agreed to fund 21 trees in Churchfields and Ship Street from Community Infrastructure Levy grant received from Cheshire West and Chester Council.

ACTION: JO

122 Hob Hey Wood

- (a) To note report from Hob Hey Wood Friends Group Mark O'Sullivan. (Appendix A) **NOTED:** The report was noted.
 - (b) To consider a request from Camp Curiosity: https://www.campcuriosity.co.uk/ for use of the woods for ad-hoc events.

RESOLVED: It was agreed to defer the item to a future meeting when a representative of Camp Curiosity is able to attend to answer questions.

123 Memorial Hill

(a) To note continuing issues in relation to the parking area at the entrance to the memorial field and

the impact on residents.

NOTED: It was noted that residents were experiencing repeated anti social behaviour often late at night and into the early hours of the morning. Calls have been logged with 101.

(b) To agree action to be taken.

RESOLVED: Clerk to request PCSO N Flanagan and Sgt Collinson to attend a future meeting of FTC to discuss.

ACTION: JO

124 Approval of minutes

(a) To approve the minutes of the meeting held 9th February 2021.

RESOLVED: The minutes were approved and the Clerk was asked to provide an action table at the end of the minutes in future.

(b) To approve the minutes of the extraordinary meeting held 17th March 2021.

RESOLVED: The minutes were approved.

125 Amenities Committee year end accounts

(a) To note that the total budget for 2020-2021 was £67,630 and total expenditure was £36,747. **NOTED:** The final year end expenditure was £40,266 to include payment of 2 invoices on 31st March 2021. (Appendix B)

(b) To note that £2,930 was spent on additional grounds maintenance works during the year as follows: fallen branches (Ship Street); strimming Manley Road Copse and installation of nurse on Frodsham Hill; graffiti removal on Churchfields play area; inspection of trees prior to installation of Xmas lights, replacement hanging basket brackets and light repairs; strimming Marshlands; repair of Xmas tree socket and removal of bollard; clearance of Manley Road Copse.

NOTED: The additional grounds maintenance works were noted.

(c) To approve the accounts for recommendation to Full Council.

RESOLVED: The accounts were approved.

126 Community Infrastructure Levy

(a) To note FTC has received £2,358.32 from the Community Infrastructure Levy administered by CWAC.

NOTED: The payment was noted.

127 Ship Street Options Appraisal

(a) To receive a report from Cllr Hayes & Cllr Wade.

NOTED: Cllr Hayes provided a report which was noted. (Appendix C)

(b) To consider actions to be taken and recommendations to be made to Full Council.

NOTED: It was noted that a further report will be provided to the Committee prior to the next meeting. The group has requested a meeting with planning officers from Cheshire West and Chester and are waiting for a response from them. It's been just over a month since that request. The group will need to prepare architects development plans as planning officers will need to review them. It was noted that there should be a budget of £10,000 for professional fees in the 2021-2022 budget. The group will need to request three quotes from appropriate organizations to support the development of detailed proposals. The proposal will have an impact on any payment that will be required from Frodsham Town Council to Cheshire West. The group need to agree, assessment questions and review the independent evaluation panel members. The information will be brought to an Amenities Committee Meeting prior to Full Council.

128 Memorial Path/Benches Working Group

(a) To receive a report from Cllr Griffiths.

NOTED: Cllr Griffiths provided a report which was noted. (Appendix D)

(b) To consider actions to be taken.

NOTED: It was noted that a further report will be provided to the Committee prior to the next meeting.

129 Manley Road Copse – Maintenance

(a) To note that initial clearance works have taken place as follows: hedge cut both sides & top; bamboo rooting from neighbouring property uprooted within copse; all bramble and unwanted vegetation is brushcut to ground level to enable sight of the land prior to further (chemical) action if instructed; unsightly or damaged small trees removed or tended; ivy removed from taller trees to enable inspection and aesthetics; litter removed; all chip spread on existing footpaths; timber from trees stacked into habitat piles to assist the environment; clearance of footpath underneath hedge to widen for pedestrians; branches extruding from copse into neighbouring property have been shortened or removed.

NOTED: The works were noted.

(b) To note the invoice in the sum of £800 has been approved for works outlined above.

NOTED: The invoice and payment was noted.

(c) To note outstanding work to be carried out; ivy removal from rear fence; brushcut bramble again; apply more chip to internal footpaths as required.

NOTED: The outstanding works were noted.

(d) To agree further action to be taken.

NOTED: No further action was agreed.

130 Standing Orders

To suspend Standing Orders to allow a report from Frodsham WI.

RESOLVED: It was agreed to suspend Standing Orders for item 131 below.

131 Frodsham WI

(a) To receive a report from Frodsham WI regarding future maintenance of Manley Road Copse. **NOTED:** Vivien Shaw (Frodsham WI) presented a report and it was noted that: members are very positive about working with Frodsham Town Council to maintain the copse and have set up a working group of nine members; Frodsham Tree Solutions have done an excellent job, have now completed the works and been asked not to apply any weed killer; feedback from members of the public has been extremely positive; the group has looked at a provisional agreement with FTC for maintenance of the area. Frodsham WI were thanked for the amazing work they have done to date.

(b) To agree further action to be taken.

RESOLVED: It was agreed that Cllr Ashton will work with members of Frodsham WI to formulate a constitution, for maintenance of Manley Road Copse to be considered at the next Amenities Committee Meeting.

ACTION: CA

132 Standing Orders

To reinstate Standing Orders.

RESOLVED: Standing Orders were reinstated.

133 Play areas

(a) To note that Cllr H Hayes and Cllr C Ashton considered the items identified from operational inspections (carried out by NTC) and visited each of the play areas following the Amenities Committee Meeting held on 17th March 2021 to inspect works identified and determine necessity to carry out works recommended.

NOTED: The actions were noted.

(b) To note that NTC has been instructed to: replace the broken bench slats and weed the area beneath the swings on Churchfields; infill trip hazard at entrance to Park Lane play area with tarmac following instruction by Cllr Griffiths (Chair).

NOTED: The instructions were noted.

(c) To note that 1 quote has been received for replacement of the closing mechanism for the gate (previously reported) at Park Lane play area in the sum of £480.00. The quote was sourced from an independent fabricator who has carried out works to gates at Castle Park House and Grounds.

NOTED: The quotation was noted.

(d) To note the play area inspections carried out by Northwich Town Council on 16th March 2021.

NOTED: The inspections were noted.

(e) To note that the remaining cradle swing on Churchfields is showing signs of wear.

NOTED: The wear to the swing was noted.

(f) To consider a quotation for missing cradle swing on Churchfields in the sum of £332.10 (Playdale BS EN 1176) which includes installation cost of £48.00.

RESOLVED: It was agreed to accept the quotation. (R4)

ACTION: JO

(g) To consider concerns expressed by Cllr Critchley (Lakes Ward Councillor) with regard to use of Townfield Lane children's play area for adult Zumba classes now that larger class sizes are permitted.

NOTED: The concerns were noted.

134 Play area inspections

(a) To note the play area inspections carried out by Northwich Town Council on 16th March 2021 and circulated to members of the Committee.

NOTED: The reports were noted.

(b) To agree actions to be taken following consideration of the reports.

NOTED: No actions were approved.

(c) To note RoSPA Annual Inspection date.

135 Current Grounds Maintenance

- (a) To note increase in grounds maintenance charges from April 2021 to July 2021 for works carried out by Lowther Forestry Group Ltd under 2020 SLA.
- (b) To agree action to be taken.

RESOLVED: (1) At the beginning of the meeting it was RESOLVED to move item 135 into a confidential section of the meeting due to the commercially sensitive nature of the item and late availability of the information. (2) It was resolved to defer the item as Councillors did not have sufficient information to enable them to make a decision on the item.

ACTION: JO

136 Grounds Maintenance SLA 2021-2022

(a) To receive a report/recommendation from Cllr Hayes and agree action.

NOTED: Cllr Hayes provided a report which was noted. (Appendix D)

(b) To consider/approve draft SLA.

RESOLVED: It was agreed to set up a working group (Cllr Griffiths, Cllr Ashton, Cllr Hayes and Clerk) to consider revisions to the document.

ACTION: JO/PG/CA/HH

(c) To consider/approve process for tender.

RESOLVED: It was agreed to approve the process for tender.

137 Groundsman

(a) To receive a report from Cllr Griffiths with regards to employing a groundsman.

NOTED: Cllr Griffiths provided a verbal report.

(b) To agree action to be taken.

RESOLVED: It was agreed to include consideration of employing a groundsman as part of the working group to consider the SLA.

ACTION: JO/PG/CA/HH

138 Amenities Committee Meetings

To note future meeting dates.

2021-2022	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	ОСТ	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY
AMENITIES		8	13	10	14	12	9	14	11	8	8	12	10
2 nd Tuesday		4pm	7pm										
@ 7pm							-	-	-	-	-		
Alternates													
between													
7pm & 4pm													

NOTED: The dates were noted.

Clerk's report

To receive Clerk's report. **NOTED:** Item not required.

139 Close of meeting

Resolution Summary:

Agenda				
ref	Item	Action	By whom	When
		Clerk to enquire as to whether funding is available through the	,	
		Welcome Back Fund administered by Cheshire West and		
		Chester Council. If funding is not available through the		
		Welcome Back Fund administered by Cheshire West and		
		Chester Council to replace 21 trees, it was agreed to fund 21		
		trees in Churchfields and Ship Street from Community		
	Tree	Infrastructure Levy grant received from Cheshire West and		
121	replacement	Chester Council.	JO	ASAP
	Memorial	Clerk to request PCSO N Flanagan and Sgt Collinson to attend a		
123(b)	hill carpark	future meeting of FTC to discuss.	JO	ASAP
		It was agreed that Cllr Ashton will work with members of		
		Frodsham WI to formulate a constitution, for maintenance of		By 8th
	Manley Rd	Manley Road Copse to be considered at the next Amenities		June
131(b)	Copse	Committee Meeting.	CA	2021
		Agreed to replace swing on Churchfields in the sum of £332.10		
	Churchfields	(Playdale BS EN 1176) which includes installation cost of		
133(f)	PA	£48.00.	JO	ASAP
	Grounds	It was agreed to set up a working group (Cllr Griffiths, Cllr		
	Maintenance	Ashton, Cllr Hayes and Clerk) to consider revisions to the		
136(b)	SLA	document.	JO/CA/PG/HH	ASAP
		It was agreed to include consideration of employing a		
137(b)	Groundsman	groundsman as part of the working group to consider the SLA.	JO/CA/PG/HH	ASAP

APPENDIX A ITEM 122

Hob Hey Wood Friends Group Update for FTC Amenities Meeting 13/04/2021

No volunteer days since November 2020.

Individuals have worked solo to perform tasks such as litter picking, sycamore removal, redundant barbed wire removal, and step sweeping.

We have continued to promote the wood on social media. Due to lockdowns, we saw an increase in visitors to the wood in 2020 and a big increase in interest in the wood (hopefully, more volunteers!)

On March 8th, Tom Blundell and I planted the disease-resistant elm tree that we won in the competition run by the Tree Council to win one of 30 such trees. Elms in the wood are still being killed by Dutch elm disease and this resistant tree will hopefully start a colony of disease-free elms that the white-letter hairstreak, a rare butterfly that lives in Hob Hey, can thrive on.

The work to replace the rotten boardwalks on the northeast path is ongoing. The contractor has cleared the old boardwalks, removed the required trees, and is ready to put the stone onto the path. Hopefully will be completed soon.

Our first volunteer day for 2021 is April 18th. We need to comply with the 'rule of six' so can have only six volunteers. Hopefully, this requirement will cease in May and we can continue with the programme of work to improve the wood.

APPENDIX B ITEM 125(a)

Explanation of Variances between budget and expenditure

In January 2020 Frodsham Town Council set a budget of £67,630 for the Amenities Committee for the period 1st April 2020 to 31st March 2021.

As of 31st March 2021 FTC has spent a total of £40,266 which represents 59.5% of the total annual budget as follows:

15:08

Detailed Income & Expenditure by Budget Heading 31/03/2021

Month No: 12

Cost Centre Report

		Actual Current Mth	Actual Year To Date	Current Annual Bud	Variance Annual Total	Committed Expenditure	Funds Available	% Spent
<u>170</u>	Ameneties							
4801	Contract No 1	2,622	21,953	24,300	2,347		2,347	90.39
4802	Contract No 2	0	6,451	10,000	3,549		3,549	64.59
4803	Play Area repairs/refurb	0	883	4,500	3,617		3,617	19.69
4804	Tree Works	0	0	2,000	2,000		2,000	0.09
4805	Hob Hey Wood	0	484	5,000	4,516		4,516	9.79
4806	Defibrilator Maintenance	88	1,209	2,000	791		791	60.59
4807	Replacement Lights	0	2,962	10,000	7,038		7,038	29.69
4808	Bulbs	0	0	80	80		80	0.09
4809	Rent & Rates	0	1,100	2,000	900		900	55.09
4811	Street Furniture	0	0	1,000	1,000		1,000	0.09
4812	Xmas Light Bulbs	0	0	750	750		750	0.09
4813	Additional grounds maint	3,094	5,224	6,000	776		776	87.19
	Ameneties :- Indirect Expenditure	5,803	40,266	67,630	27,364	0	27,364	59.5
	Movement to/(from) Gen Reserve	(5,803)	(40,266)					
	Grand Totals:- Income	0	0	0	0			0.0
	Expenditure	5,803	40,266	67,630	27,364	0	27,364	59.5
	Net Income over Expenditure	(5,803)	(40,266)	(67,630)	(27,364)			
	Movement to/(from) Gen Reserve	(5,803)	(40,266)					

Explanation budget/expenditure variation

4802 Contract No 2 budget 2020-2021 included contingency for additional cuts which were not required as the amenity areas were not in use due to COVID-19. Budget set prior to lockdown 1.

4803 No works have been instructed by Amenities Committee. Budget set prior to lockdown 1.

4805 The only expenditure within financial year 2020-2021 is on the 2021 calendar.

4806 This is a fluid expenditure depending on deployment of devices.

4807 No lights have been replaced (festoon).

APPENDIX C ITEM 127(a)

Decisions made by Councillors (to date)

- 1. Overall project outcome agreed as the provision of a recreational greenspace for children, residents and visitors to Waterside ward.
- 2. Options agreed for consideration are:
 - Ship Street play area (Green Gates) land as a multi-generational recreation area funded by Frodsham Town Council and community group funding
 - Ship Street play area (Green Gates) land as a multi-generational recreation area with a community hub funded by Frodsham Town Council and community group funding
 - Ship Street play area (Green Gates) land as a multi-generational recreation area with a multipurpose community hub and Council office funded by Frodsham Town Council
 - Ship Street play area (Green Gates) land sold to a Housing Association for affordable homes / social housing, including a play area and revenue used to re-develop Salt Works Playing Fields (in partnership with Cheshire West and Chester Council)
 - Do nothing
- 3. Working group agreed to prepare information about each identified option and develop an assessment system.
 - Cllr Caroline Ashton
 - Cllr Helen Hayes
 - Cllr Bernie Wade

Previous members have included:

- Cllr Judith Critchley resigned from working group
- Cllr Debra Mostyn-Jones resigned from FTC
- Cllr Mallie Poulton resigned from FTC
- Cllr Lucy Sumner resigned from FTC
- 4. Assessment criteria themes of investigation agreed as:
 - a. Desirability the degree to which each option meets the strategic objective and priorities of stakeholders
 - b. Viability the degree to which each option is financially viable and sustainable
 - c. Feasibility the degree to which each option can be implemented
 - d. Social Value the degree to which each option impacts people's lives (social return on investment)

Desirability – stakeholders agreed as residents of Frodsham, Frodsham Town Council and Cheshire West and Chester Council.

Viability – whole life costs to be taken into account (25 years).

Feasibility – full project implementation to be considered.

Social Value – both positive and negative impact assessment.

5. Design specifications agreed for options:

	Option	Option	Option	Option	Option
	1	2	3	4	5
Perimeter fencing	Y	Υ	Υ	X	Y
Pathways	Y	Υ	Υ	X	X
Seating	Y	Υ	Υ	X	X
Landscaping	Y	Υ	Υ	X	X
Junior and infant play equipment	Y	Υ	Υ	X	X
Natural play	Y	Υ	X	X	X
Small gated infant play area	X	X	Υ	Υ	X
Open shelter	Y	X	X	X	X
Temporary hub	X	Υ	X	Χ	X

Permanent hub	X	X	Υ	X	X
Housing	X	X	X	Υ	X

6. Advice obtained on covenant held

CWaC advised that removing the covenant (to enable sale of the land for potential housing) included a 30% payment (of sale of the land) payable to CWaC for improvements / developments at Saltworks.

It was also noted that any development of the land, other than use as a play area, would require similar payment and that development of the site would increase the value of the land.

7. Advice requested from CWaC Planning Officers

Meeting tbc.

Discussion / decisions for Councillors at subsequent meetings (tbc)

- 8. Confirm original funding for professional fees is secure in 2021/22 budget.
- 9. Request three quotes from appropriate organisations to support the development of detailed proposals for each option.
- 10. Agree assessment questions, including weightings to be used.
- 11. Review independent evaluation panel members.
- 12. Agree timescales and milestones for completion.

APPENDIX D ITEM 128(a)

Notes from Zoom Meeting held on 18/02/2021.

Attendees:- Cllr Phil Griffiths (Team Lead), Vivien Shaw – Frodsham WI, Cllr Bill Stockton, Cllr Bernie Wade

Apologies:- Cllr Ryan McKeown

Memorial Bench

Background.

The Working Party was formed after a meeting of Frodsham Town Council Policy (FTC) Process and Revenue (PP&R) Committee which had received a request for a Memorial Bench to be sited in memory of a recently deceased youngster. Although the Council is sympathetic to the request there are currently no suitable sites available. Moreover, FTC has a Policy Document that states that no more benches can be accommodated.

An idea was put forward that FTC should have one bench for quiet contemplation, prayer etc of those who had lost loved ones and that we should possibly investigate a suitable plinth, wall for the siting of small memorial plaques. Cllr Griffiths agreed to lead a Working Party to investigate options and report back to FTC.

Since then, it was discovered that the original Seats Policy was out of date and not fit for purpose. It is now proposed that rather than just one bench there may be several at different sites around the town. Some of these seats will be dedicated memorial Seats, others may be sited where there is a genuine need.

It has also decided that the Memorial Bench and Memorial Path Working Groups would be merged and report back to the FTC Amenities Committee.

Potential Sites

Any chosen site should ideally be Central, Easily Accessible, Peaceful but not too isolated and finally parking should be readily available. So far potential sites identified:-

- Manley Road Copse. Although parking is difficult there is sufficient parking available down the road by the Scout Hut. Since the meeting Frodsham WI have agreed to take an active interest in the upkeep of the Copse following clearing work funded by FTC
- Marshlands. May be a bit too isolated and subject to antisocial behaviour.
- Top of Frodsham Hill. Although the lower part of the cemetery is full of benches there are none at the top.
- The Town Clark indicated that there is another site designated during the 1990s with a bench etc but no one seems to be aware of it. Cllr Griffiths to follow up with the Clerk.
- Hob Hey Wood. Access not ideal but feasible.
- Castle Park. Cllr Griffiths has written to CWAC Councillor Lynn Riley as Chair of Castle Park
 Trustees to identify any possible site. Unfortunately, the last Castle Park Trustee Meeting was
 cancelled due to it not been quorate. Cllr Griffiths to follow up with CWAC Councillor Lynn Riley.

In line with FTC's procurement strategy, we have now identified two potential suppliers of benches which should ideally be robustly constructed, stylish, durable and as vandal proof as possible. Cllrs Griffiths, Ashton and Wade will work together to select suitable designs to be presented to the Working Group.

Funding

It is anticipated that costs for any benches and their ongoing maintenance will be met by any one wishing to have a bench dedicated to a loved one. In order to release benches for reuse it is recommended that such dedications have a finite span od 20 years, although this needs further debate.

Since the meeting the UK Government have announced "The Welcome Back" initiative to provide post COVID regeneration funds, these funds may be used for such things as tree planting and provision of benches. Cllr Griffiths has asked the Town Clark to identify any funding initiatives.

Memorial Path

- 1. To ask if the group feel we would benefit from input from outside bodies. For example, The Royal British Legion
- 2. Agreed we need to employ a Landscape Architect. This could be more cost effect in the long run. A provisional list of specialists has been supplied to the Town Clark who has been asked to request quotes.
- 3. Having spoken to someone that deals in this kind of work he has given the following advice.
 - a. Pressure treated wood edging is advisable, since it usually comes with a 25yr. guarantee and eventually biodegrades becoming almost invisible, making the pathway more natural.
 - b. Kerbstones are very expensive and he doubts if they would be suitable with the sandstone having to be dug out to put a base down for them.
 - c. He suggested colouring the sandstone around the monument allowing it to blend in with the natural surroundings.
 - d. We need more suggestions as to the shape.
- 4. We discussed about having the path to circle the Round Table Plinth, but decided that this would not be feasible due to the unevenness of the surface.

We are now in the process of finding three Landscape Architects. Once we have sourced them, the next stage will be to discuss our ideas and get some idea of costings.

Next Meeting – TBA Following Amenities Committee Meeting on 13/4/2021.

APPENDIX E ITEM 136(a)

Summary

This report seeks approval to commence a procurement process to secure new Grounds Maintenance contracts to replace the existing contracts that expired in October 2020.

The contract(s) is intended for all FTC designated land assets, which include playing fields, play areas, community orchards, cemetery, woods etc.

The contract(s) should commence from 1st September 2021 for a period of one year with the option to extend up to a further three years (to a maximum of four years) subject to the future requirements for a grounds maintenance service and the performance of the appointed providers.

Recommendations

FTC is recommended to approve:

- 1. The commencement of the procurement process for the provision of Grounds Maintenance Services as detailed in the accompanying papers.
- 2. Authority is delegated to the Amenities Committee to award the contract(s) to the bidder(s) submitting the most economically advantageous tender(s) in terms of technical and commercial ability.
- 3. The contract(s) should be for a minimum of one year commencing on 1st September 2021.
- 4. The contract(s) to include for optional extension for periods of up to three years for a maximum contract period of four years subject to the future requirements for grounds maintenance services and the performance of the appointed service provider(s).
- 5. To make the contract available to other public sector bodies as defined within the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 within the geographical boundaries of Cheshire.