

Frodsham Town Council
 Minutes of an Extra Ordinary meeting of
Frodsham Town Council
 held on Monday 7 March 2016 at 7pm
 In the Main House, Castle Park, Frodsham



Present: Cllrs J Critchley (Chair), C Ashton, L Brown, C Collins-Doyle, D Critchley, L Jones, P Martin, A Oulton, F Pennington, M Poulton, T Reynolds, F Sutton and S Wakefield.
 Mrs H Catt (Town Clerk).

In Attendance: Cllrs A W Dawson & L Riley (CWaC), 7 members of the public & 1 member of the press..

Meeting 20

| Item | Action/Decision/Notes/ Recommendations |
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| 234 | Apologies for Absence Cllrs P Martin and R Knowles |
| 235 | Declaration of Interests None |
| 236 | Castle Park House |
| 236.a | <p>Public Speaking Time The Chair invited members of the public to speak before the main discussion started. Peter Vickery (Chair of Castle Park Arts Centre) stated that since the day-to-day stewardship of the house had passed to FTC the Arts Centre had felt there was an improvement in working relationships in the Park. The Arts Centre raises the funding needed to maintain their building through events and activities. He said please don't leave the Park. Cllr R Knowles arrived at this point. Andy Pendleton wondered why FTC had taken on these premises as they were so expensive. The history was briefly explained.</p> |
| | <p>Castle Park House Currently the rent is £32k pa + £12,500 rates with a £22k subsidy from CWAC towards the costs of running the reception desk & managing the Housekeeping. An Organisational Review Working Group has been established to review the situation and consider other options. This WG has met with representative from CWAC and CPT to discuss an offer made to reduce the rent by £4k in exchange for CWAC having free use of the rooms and CPT getting 40% of any income we achieve, which had been initially rejected by FTC. There had been discussion about renting out areas of the ground floor not currently in use or FTC renting less space. CPT have asked for a response by 10 March ready for their next meeting. Cllr Poulton suggested that FTC should consider running the House as an off-shoot business and to employ Event Management people who are not cheap. There will need to be a Business Plan. The building will need redecoration and re-organising to make it work. Cllr Ashton was concerned about having to make any decisions in such a short time and without further details. Cllr Pennington have further history about the house and HLF requirement for CWAC to keep the House and Gardens in good condition for 25 years. He reported that one of the tenants already in the building is interested in moving downstairs to take up the empty desks. He would rather FTC moved into rooms upstairs rather than leave the House. Cllrs Dawson & Riley (CPT Executive Chair & Vice-Chair) All the information about the Trust is in the public domain. The Trust is a charitable Trust with only one Trustee – CWAC. CWAC has delegated to CPT Executive Body and charges a 10% management fee. CWAC do all the lettings without reference to CPT. FTC has a non-voting seat on the Executive Body but has been offered the opportunity to more involved in the new Trust following re-organisation which is planned this year. It has</p> |

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| | <p>been hoped that these new documents would be presented at the next meeting on 24 March which why there was a deadline for a decision from FTC about whether it wanted a seat at the table by 10 March.</p> <p>Cllr Dawson pointed out that the Heads of Terms agreed between FTC and CWAC were not reflected in the Tenancy at Will which was subsequently signed and that FTC should have sought legal advice before signing. The HoTs allowed sub-letting and didn't mention the rates whereas the TaW doesn't allow sub-letting and does state that rates are payable. Cllr Dawson had written to CWAC, on behalf of CPT, expressing serious concerns about the way they are managing the House. If CWAC had done its job better we would not be in this situation. The financial integrity of CPT is impacted by any increased support to FTC. There is a Sinking Fund to provide for maintenance with an expectation of adding £25k per annum but this has not been achieved in years when there are vacancies. They have set aside £10k towards Castle Park events from their Members Budget.</p> <p>Cllr Riley felt that FTC needed to be an integral part of CPT – we need to be partners rather than fighting over this. The building as to be used as Council Offices.</p> <p>Cllr Sutton asked why CWAC & CPT hadn't been able to make more income if this was such a great opportunity. Cllr Dawson explained that CWAC had allowed events to run in the park, including Moonlight Flicks, without charging them. CWAC had drafted a 'How to put on an event in Castle Park' guide which was very disappointing.</p> <p>Cllr Oulton felt that CWAC hadn't acted fairly in their dealings over the Tenancy at Will.</p> <p>Cllr Reynolds suggested that the day-to-day management should be carried out by a Community Interest Company set up with FTC, CWAC and CPT as Directors. He asked if CWAC Members Budget could be used to help write the business plan.</p> <p>Cllr Dawson explained there was no deadline for deciding on the TaW just the restructuring of the Trust and FTC's involvement.</p> <p>Cllr Ashton felt that Cllrs Dawson & Riley had a serious conflict of interest being on the Executive Body and CWAC Ward Cllrs.</p> <p>Cllr Dawson advised that FTC needed to take legal advice before taking on trusteeship of CPT and to try and ring-fence our liabilities.</p> <p>Cllr Pennington proposed that we renegotiate a better deal including changing the TaW. and also to take legal advice about take a bigger role in the Trust.</p> <p>Recorded vote: All present voted for the proposal.</p> <p>TC to write to PCT to say that we are fully committed to moving forward with the trust and will be seeking legal advice.</p> <p>Anyone can attend the CPT Executive meeting on 24 March 4pm at CPH.</p> |

Meeting ended 8.55pm.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Town Clerk: Mrs Hazel Catt
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