

Frodsham Town Council
Minutes of the meeting of
Frodsham Town Council



Held on Monday 8 June at 7.30pm
In Castle Park House, Castle Park, Frodsham

Meeting 2

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

Item	Action/Decision/Notes/ Recommendations
27 Apologies for Absence	Cllr Brown
28 Declaration of Interests	<p>Cllrs Pennington re London Road Allotments Cllr Pusey re membership of the Community Centre Committee, Love Frodsham, Frodsham Foundation and as Chair of Sutton Parish Council Cllr Wakefield re London Road Allotments and as a member of Advisory Panel to Frodsham Foundation. Cllr Oulton as an employee of an organisation with an interest in Churchfields, and as a member of the Friends of John Williamson.</p>
29 Minutes of Meeting no 17, held on 16 March 2015	
a Acceptance and signing	Accepted and signed as a true and accurate record of the meeting.
b Matters arising.	None
30 Minutes of Meeting No.1 held on 18 May 2015	
a Acceptance and signing	Accepted and signed as a true and accurate record of the meeting, subject to minor amendment by the Clerk – Cllr Reynolds wished to be named as the Councillor referred to, in item 8A...
b Matters Arising	None – The Chair noted that a copy of the Council’s letter to the HLF in support of the Goods Shed bid had been circulated.
31 Public Speaking Time/Reports from Public Bodies (inc FTC response)	<p>Mr. Dillon: He hoped that if, as he had heard the Goods Shed bid had been unsuccessful, no-one would blame this on the letter sent by Cllr Reynolds.</p> <p>He asked what license/planning requirements were in place for placing chairs and tables on a public highway. The Clerk agreed to make enquiries. Action: Clerk</p> <p>He had discussed the parking issue in Frodsham with Cllr Dawson, and made some suggestions: that Main Street be marked off to allow more cars to park, that the Council consider buying more land for parking, and that the idea of two tier parking (Warrington Hospital was mentioned in this context) be explored. He believed councillors should act on this to convince local residents that they were interested in the town, rather than seeking status.</p> <p>In response, the Chair pointed out that car parking was part of FTC’s five year strategy, but it would take some time to solve these problems, and the new Council – all of whom were giving their time freely for the benefit of Frodsham, would need some time to establish itself.</p> <p>Cllr Reynolds reported that he had enquired of HLF whether his letter had contributed to the non- grant for the Goods Shed, He</p>

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	<p>understood that there were a number of factors that had decided their non-grant, but that he understood the issue of parking had not been the deciding factor. He was attempting to get more detail. He reminded those present that he had previously said he no longer had the same interest in the Foundation, now that he understood further Council funds would not be sought.</p> <p>Kate Dodgson, Frodsham Foundation, read out a press release the Foundation had issued, This is attached at A.</p> <p>The Chairman expressed regret at the non-receipt of the grant, as it would deprive a part of Frodsham of much needed inward investment</p> <p>Mrs. Dodgson asked the Clerk if he would inform all Councillors of the names of all individuals who applied for the job of Town Champion three years ago. Clerk to consider whether this was appropriate, and if so to action. Action: Clerk</p> <p>A written report had been circulated by the PCSO.</p>
32	Reports from Council and Urgent Local Issues
A	<p>Members/Chairman/Mayor</p> <p>Members</p> <p>1. Dog Fouling Initiative:</p> <p>Cllr Martin spoke to introduce his paper. He proposed a two phase plan, starting with awareness raising, and mobilising volunteers. This would see lots of publicity through a range of media over a two month period. Phase two would see direct intervention and action in response or persistent offenders – this could even result in court proceedings ultimately, though the majority of the action taken would be around talking to and challenging individuals about their behaviour.</p> <p>It would be necessary, from the off, to work with other stakeholders, including the PCSO, CWAC and others. A first step would be to arrange a meeting of key stakeholders to plan the work. Early discussion with them had indicated support for the idea.</p> <p>During discussion the following points were made:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There was scope for sponsorship from some local businesses, such as for posters etc. • There might be a need for a survey of where dogbins are, etc. This to ensure that the grounds for any enforcement action later were solid. • This project would not find support with all Frodsham residents – the Council needed to be determined in the face of opposition and some hostility, • One Councillor raised issues about alternative motorised collection methods, as used he said in cities such as Paris. • As FTC moved to have more influence over the public spaces in Frodsham, it brought into sharper relief the question of whether the town should be looking to have its own warden, one day. <p>The matter of the Great British High Street campaign was raised by one Councillor. It was agreed that the Council should write a letter of support. Action : Clerk</p> <p>Chairman’s Report</p> <p>He reported on activity at the Weaver and Sandstone Cycle Forum, where they were lobbying for widening of the path used for Schoolchildren to get to Helsby High School.</p>

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		<p>Mayor's Report</p> <p>The mayor reported that her diary was already filling up, and she expected to have more to report next month.</p>
B	Clerk	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Council agreed a request from Frodsham Festival in the Park, for a grant of 500. Action: Clerk 2. The Clerk reminded all Councillors that they needed to let him have details of their preferred dates for training, especially perhaps new councillors. 3. He also reminded councillors that Council email addresses had been purchased for them. They needed to work with the IT provider in going through the quick and simple process of setting these up.
C	WW1 Working Group	<p>Minutes of the meeting 18 March were noted</p> <p>Minutes of the meeting dated 20 May were noted, and draft TOR (R1) and costs of publication of book (R2) were both agreed.</p> <p>Cllr Wakefield updated the meeting on plans for the forthcoming Memory Day (26 September) and concert, Bullets and Daffodils, planned for 2 October. Tickets would be available soon at the soon to be updated website.</p> <p>A letter of thanks had been received from Geoff Abnett, for FTC's involvement in the commemoration at the Menin Gate.</p>
33 Asset Management		
A	Churchfields	<p>The Clerk confirmed that work was planned to commence in July, with a completion date in August. This was later than had been hoped, due to ordering timescales for equipment being high at the moment. The Clerk was asked for information on milestones of the project from Groundwork, the Project Manager. These would give an idea of progress at future meetings, though the Clerk pointed out that the entire project should be completed in two months. Action: Clerk</p>
B	Ship Street	<p>There had been no further response from CWAC on the matter of the covenant, and on what terms they would agree to release it. It was difficult, in the absence of any proposal from them, to take the matter forward.</p> <p>The point was made that residents should be asked what they wanted to happen to the land. If built on, there was support for older people's bungalows for example. Also, that the covenant did not of itself restrict what the money from sale should be spent on – though if course that could well be a condition of any deal done.</p> <p>There were major opportunities for FTC here, in terms of providing a revenue stream for the future but there was nothing to communicate with the public at this stage, as no negotiation has taken place or was immediately due.</p> <p>The Clerk was asked to consider whether to allow the side gates to be opened in the interim, for dog walkers. He would do so, but pointed out that the negotiating position on an open and used recreation area might be very different to that on a closed one.</p>
C	Park Lane Sale	<p>The Clerk reported that the purchaser had backed out. He now felt it was time for the Council to consider what it wanted to do – might an auction be a better way to quickly receive these funds needed to finance the council's plans?</p> <p>Time had previously even allowed for local residents to make proposals, or indeed to offer to purchase. It had been agreed not to exchange</p>

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	<p>contracts in a 60 day period. As it turned out contracts had never been exchanged. No offer had been made by residents, but the door remained open.</p> <p>A vote on the decision to sell by auction did not proceed. This was due to uncertainties over whether Cllr Oulton could vote, in view of his declared interest. The Clerk would consider, before any vote was taken.</p> <p>Clerk's note: <i>on reflection I feel that the new councillors, while briefed to a degree, have not had chance to take part in a proper discussion on this. Therefore advantage will be taken of the deferred vote to have a detailed discussion at an Extraordinary Meeting 16 June.</i></p> <p><i>This will aid transparency, as the specific question to be resolved can be included on the agenda – desirable for a matter as Important as this.</i></p> <p>It was important that a quick decision be made however – the funds from the sale were key to taking forward the Council's Play Strategy. Other sources of funds such as Ship Street were now on the horizon too, but they were very much less certain.</p>
<p>D Townfield Lane</p>	<p>Proposals for the new play area design were in this month's Frodsham Life, and would be delivered door to door in the streets surrounding the play area by appropriate ward councillors.</p> <p>It was asked whether wider door to door circulation was needed, and the Clerk would consider, though the mix of Frodsham Life to every house and media such as Facebook should mean that coverage for the new plans should be thorough.</p> <p>It was mentioned that the review of signage at play areas and other locations underway would clear up some present uncertainties about ball games etc., where some signs were inconsistent.</p>
<p>E London Road Allotments</p>	<p>The Clerk read out a brief report from the Project Manager. The new designs for a gabion wall were being discussed with English Nature. This would need to be agreed before a price could be confirmed, and work completed.</p>
<p>34 Strategy/Management</p>	
<p>A Council Communications</p>	<p>Cllr Knowles introduced his paper on communications. This aimed at ensuring a single message was put out from the Council when trying to communicate its policies and views – this would be issued through a mix of media appropriate to the message, with the website key to this. He saw the role of the site as being an information station for the town, a hub for finding out about Frodsham.</p> <p>He stressed the need for Councilors to get behind, and promote, decisions made. When this did not happen, the Council was shown in a poor light, and was one reason that trust in the Council was felt by some to be low.</p> <p>Listening to people's views was a key part of the decision making process.</p> <p>Information should flow easily between councillors. Social media should be used to cascade announcements, though bickering on social media was particularly unhelpful. There was a difference between freedom of speech and shooting down of decisions made.</p> <p>During discussion the following points were made:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One Councillor felt that the public expected councillors to keep pushing for the things they wanted to see, even after Council had made decisions.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Talking to people in the ward was a key part of Council communication. Both to find out what they think, and to communicate decision. • Should agendas go in different places – pubs? • Some councillors wished to see the return of the Frodsham Post. • It was necessary to work and communicate as one – including with CWAC councillors. • There might be scope for media other than electronic and print. Interactive signs perhaps? All tools, available should be used, including templates to minimise work required. <p>It was agreed that the paper was a good start, but that a group should be formed, to put together costed proposals to a future meeting.</p> <p>The following councillors expressed an interest in joining the working group: Cllrs Clarke, Reynolds, Pusey, Sutton, Wakefield, Fraser, Oulton, and Collins-Doyle.</p>
<p>B Committee Structure</p>	<p>Introducing his paper, the Chair said that the new Council presented a good opportunity to reconsider how the Council worked and made decisions. Also, to consider how it could make the best use of the spread of skills Councillors brought. The Committee structure should be informed by these considerations, as well as the need to get the Council's business done efficiently.</p> <p>The previous structure had been in place for the life of the last Council. and the Chair now presented some new ideas as to how these arrangements might be improved. The paper advocated setting up new committees, based on the functions of the Council, supported by greater use of Task and Finish Groups such as the successful one that had even set up toy lead on WW1 matters in the last Council.</p> <p>The Clerk also spoke – he said that the proposed new way of working aimed to replace the traditional, top down and linear decision making process with one which was more organic, and would allow more input from more councillors, in a less formal and time consuming way. The proposal for an audit committee to replace many of the functions of Policy and Process was also made.</p> <p>The intention might be for some of the Committees to meet less often than others. A Committee looking after the Council's places might avoid any duplication or contradiction of effort between groups, as could happen now.</p> <p>Some tasks could perhaps be handled by individual Council champions (such as HR functions)., though such change would need to be reflected in Standing Orders,</p> <p>During discussion the following points were made:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There had been no proposals made to change Planning Committee – though it might be possible to extend its remit to cover e.g. traffic management issues. There was little contact with the public on planning matters by FTC. This might change too? • The event run last year to involve the public in giving of grants had been successful, and more of that kind of approach could be welcome. • Better understanding of the skill set around the Council would be very valuable. • There was a need to consider how Ward councillors might best work together. Wards should be built in to any structure.

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budgets – more delegated power to committees would help. • The purpose of any new structure should be to take discussion at FTC away from structures etc., and to allow discussion at FTC of major topics for the town. <p>It was agreed to continue with the present structures for now, recognising that this would involve sticking with last Council's TOR etc., and that there would be the need for some potentially very short term Chair appointments. There were also a large number of Councillors wishing to join Community. This would require a suspension of that aspect of Standing Orders, perhaps.</p> <p>This was not likely to be effective as long term solution though, and further discussion would be needed at a future meeting, before too long.</p>
35	Finance Management : 01.03.15-31.03.15	
A	Paid Expenditure	Noted
B	Received Income	Noted
C	Bank Reconciliation	Noted
36	Finance Management: 01.04.15 – 30.04.15	
A	Paid Expenditure	Noted
B	Received Income	Noted
C	Bank Reconciliation	Noted
37	Annual Report and Accounts	<p>Draft had been issued at Annual Town Meeting. Final version now – which had not changed since – was now formally adopted by the Council and would go forward to the External Auditor in due course.</p> <p>Action: Clerk</p>
38	Items for Next Agends	To be notified to Clerk.
39	Dates of Next Meetings	Next meeting would be 29 June, after which Council would revert to the last Monday of each month.

Meeting closed at 10.00pm

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Town Clerk: Mr Jon Wild
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