

Minutes of the meeting of
Frodsham Town Council



held on Monday 3 November 2014 at 7.30pm

In the Lounge, Frodsham Community Centre, Fluin Lane, Frodsham

Present: Cllrs Warren (Chairman), Pennington, Shearn, Taylor, Wakefield, Ashton, Riley, Bondi, Dawson, Redhead, Kelly, Oulton and Pusey, Jon Wild (Town Clerk), Anne Scriven (Office Manager), Hazel Catt (Service Manager), Neil Flanagan (PCSO), Kate Dodgson (Frodsham Foundation), PressX1, and around six members of the public.

The personal interests of Cllr SL Riley and Cllr A W Dawson are noted on the basis that they are both elected members of this Council and CWAC. Cllr Dawson is also a member of the Police and Crime panel. Cllrs Dawson, Pusey, Riley and Wakefield are members of Frodsham Foundation. Cllr Pusey is a trustee of Frodsham Community Association and Chair of Sutton Parish Council. Cllr Shearn is a trustee of Frodsham Youth Association. Cllr Dawson is Chair of the Executive Committee of Castle Park Trust.

Meeting 10

Item		Action/Decision/Notes/ Recommendations
162	Apologies for Absence	Cllrs Brown, Wakefield, and Sutton
163	Declaration of Interests	<p>Cllrs Dawson and Riley - repeated interests above. Cllr Riley as director of Groundwork Cheshire.</p> <p>Cllr Redhead as trustee of Youth Association Cllr Oulton as member of Friends of John Williams and as past contractor to Groundwork Cheshire. Cllr Pusey as Chair of Sutton Parish Council, trustee of Youth Association and director of Frodsham Foundation.</p> <p>Cllr Dawson was unhappy with the Clerk's decision to try to rationalise the way interests were noted (currently up to three times per meeting). He had decided to remove interests from the agenda, as there was no requirement to include. Cllrs supported reintroduction of the multiple records, the Clerk would reinstate from next month.</p>
164	Minutes of Meeting 8, 22 September 2014	Agreed as a true and accurate record of the meeting.
165	Minutes of Meeting 9, 29 September 2014	Agreed as a true and accurate record of the meeting
166	Public Speaking Time/ Reports from Public Bodies	
Public Speaking		<p>Mr. Reynolds spoke on some matters concerning the relationship between Frodsham Town Council and the Frodsham Foundation. He was worried about potential conflicts of interest that Councillors could face if they were members of both, and he directed some questions towards those councillors who sat on both bodies. He handed out some written documents to selected councillors.</p> <p>In response, Cllr Dawson reminded Mr. Reynolds that councillors had to abide by the Code of Conduct, which precluded voting on matters where there were potentially conflicting financial interests.</p> <p>Mr. Reynolds was of the view that the two organisations were getting "entwined", and that the relationship needed to be simplified. Cllr Dawson invited Mr Reynolds to write a letter if he required a more considered response.</p> <p>Ms Whitby asked about progress on Churchfields. The Chairman said that while the matter was on tonight's agenda, in fact the situation remained as previously reported.</p>

<p>Police</p>	<p>The PCSO reported one burglary and five thefts from cars since the last meeting. Non-secure vehicles remained a problem, but there was no clear pattern to the crimes. There had been three incidences of shop lifting, where the perpetrators had been identified. Three drive offs at the petrol station had occurred, and six antisocial behaviour incidents, including a loose dog and a quad bike use on Salt Works Farm.</p> <p>As reported in the press, a body had been found near Manley Road caves – this belonged to a Runcorn resident, and there were no suspicious circumstances.</p> <p>The PCSO had been speaking to year 5 ad 6 children about Halloween and Bonfire Night.</p> <p>Speed enforcement efforts continued – with an impact day due in February. In the meantime, speed checks had been carried out in Fluin Lane, Manley Road and Church Street; Smiley SID had been deployed around the town.</p> <p>Training in the speed gun bought by the council was to take place 15 November. All potential trainees should liaise with the Office.</p> <p>Cllr Wales had been on patrol with the PCSO.</p> <p>Surgeries – there was to be one at the Community Centre before and another after the PCSO’s presentation this evening. This would be repeated 24 November, at the next FTC meeting. One was due on 5 November at Costa, 10AM-12PM. There would be one 27 November at 1PM-3PM, at Frodsham Library.</p> <p>The children’s CSI day in the library over half term had been well received.</p>
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<p>167</p>	<p>Reports from Council, CWAC and Urgent Local Issues</p>
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<p>a</p>	<p>Members/Chairman’s Round</p>	<p>Badges (A) for the planned Freedom of Frodsham and for past Councillors were ordered and awaited. Cllr Dawson proposed that the Council set up an award scheme for meritorious community service. He referred to the initial proposals he had made some time ago. The main proposal was for a presentation to be made – perhaps at the Town Meeting – based on nomination from the public. It was a way to say thank you to people who had served Frodsham. There was broad support for the proposal, and it was agreed that the paper – circulated earlier by Cllr Dawson – would come back to FTC later in November.</p> <p>A further request for funding from Frodsham Foundation (B) was considered. This was for £4167, and would pay for continuation of the communications work until the end of May 2015. Cllr Pusey introduced the proposal, and stressed that a grant was not sought – just payment for a service that the Foundation was singularly well placed to provide. For this reason, the Council’s procurement rules would not be breached by this payment. Without this payment the service, which had been requested in the first place by FTC, would be switched off.</p> <p>During discussion the following points were made;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It was necessary to look beyond the cost of the activity, and to think about the value gained from the Foundation and its work. What value did the Council attach to a successful electronic portal that enabled the posting of information and, now, the filling of local vacancies? • Some Councillors asked how much the Council had spent already with the Foundation. The Chairman felt this was slightly more than £30K. It was asked where the money had been spent, and it was stressed by the Chairman that Frodsham Foundation’s accounts had been published correctly, and had been retransmitted by Cllr Dawson in his blog. • It was important to be able to prove value for money, for example against the previous cost of the Frodsham Post, which had attracted
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advertising. Was it necessary to look at other potential providers before spending more? Would the public expect competitive quotes? The contrary view was that this was a specialist service, with the Foundation perhaps uniquely placed to provide. We therefore did not need to get quotes.

- Some Councillors felt that non-IT users would be less well served. It was though recognised that increasingly, service providers were looking to on line provision.
- The Council should be looking to see public money spent wisely, such as in driving the local economy. There was evidence that this was happening, such as with the very large take up for recent job advertisements.
- The original plan with the Foundation had been for FTC and CWAC to contribute to a greater whole. There was now evidence that the Council had more influence over public services than ever before.
- Publicity provided in the newsletter for events such as WW1 events had proved valuable. Sutton Weaver had found their new Parish Clerk through it. It could very well prove cheaper to engage the Foundation to do some of this work than paying for our own efforts. There was nevertheless the need for the Foundation to find other ways to pay for itself – one example being that advertisers in the Newsletter might need to pay. Another was the scope to get paid advertisements. The Foundation was considering this. Going forward, it should not be necessary for the Foundation to come back for more money once the Newsletter was fully established.
- There was more than one kind of value provided – for example value was provided to those residents without work.

On a proposal it was **agreed** to pay to Frodsham Foundation the sum of £4167, for continuance off the information services they provide.

A request was made for a **named vote**. Cllrs Kelly, Ashton, Redhead, Taylor and Wales voted for. Cllrs Pennington, Shearn and Bondi voted against. The Chairman did not vote, and Cllrs Dawson, Riley and Pusey removed themselves from the voting process, in the light of interests declared.

The proposal was **agreed**.

Cllr Pusey provided an update on progress with the **Christmas Festival (C)**. The leaflet was ready and being issued, all stalls were taken. Switch on was planned for 6.30 on 29 November. The parade would commence after. This would include HGV's, walkers and the Silver Band, Stalls would be open 12 to 8PM. Free face painting and children's entertainment would be available behind the Bears Paw.

Car parking was discussed: while the station car park would be closed there was in fact more space than for the last Festival, on Main St, the Health Centre, Community Centre and Community Centre fields.

A4 notices would be put up in prominent locations, indicating the locations of toilets, and car parks.

On the **Frodsham Survey (D)**, the Clerk issued advance copies of the survey outcomes. These were at the printers and due in a week or so, after which efforts to distribute would begin. Once councillors had seen, they would be put on line. Councillors were asked NOT to do so themselves in the meantime, to ensure orderly communication.

500 booklets would be ordered with supplies in prominent places, appropriately advertised.

One councillor asked if there was a further role for the advisory group – Cllr Dawson said he would be happy to convene another meeting if the group wished, though there would be no further scope for changing the document

		<p>at this stage. The point was made that a better choice of colours might have been made for the graphics – a learning point for any future documents.</p> <p>Cycle Strategy (E) – good progress was being made by the group – which included surrounding Parish Councils and Sustrans. CWAC had been invited. One priority was gaining a safe route to Helsby High School – the new crossing would link with the reclaimed footpath on the A56, cleared by volunteers. Next tasks included mapping of cycle routes;</p> <p>The Service Manager had sourced three quotes for work to Hob Hey Wood paths (F). The quotes were read out and a contractor chosen on grounds of price. The Council was pleased that the contractor was fairly local. To commission work. Action: Service manager</p> <p>Cllr Wales reported an interesting evening on the beat with the PCSO. Cllr Wales had been impressed with the good interventions that the PCSO had had with local youth, around Frodsham. He felt the PCSO had shown good rapport with them.</p>
b	Committees	
	A: Planning	<p>Cllr Bondi described the discussion on the Mersey View proposals. There had been doubt about whether the site was truly brownfield just because it had been a car park, albeit on green belt. The Committee had asked for the application to be called in. Cllr Riley was able to confirm that it had in fact been called in. FTC was likely to want to send a representative. Cllr Bondi would await the CWAC evaluation with interest.</p> <p>Minutes 01.10.14 (5) – noted</p>
	B, C, D: Policy and Process	<p>Minutes 06.08.14, 24.09.14 and 08.10.14 – noted.</p> <p>Minutes 06.08.14 (3) <i>R1: The Committee recommended that FTC approve the revised Reporting Structure. Agreed to adjourn to Part B.</i></p> <p>Meeting 24.09.14 (5) <i>R1: That FTC agrees the amended Job Description and Statement of Particulars of the Clerk. Agreed.</i> <i>R2: That FTC notes the outcome and findings of the external audit report for 2013/14. Agreed</i> <i>R3: That FTC agrees revised rates of pay for members of staff. For discussion in Part B</i></p> <p><i>EP1: Clerk to purchase Commonwealth flag and CD, for use in planned Commonwealth Day event next year. Noted.</i> Service Manager had placed order.</p> <p>Meeting 08.10.14 (6) <i>R1 – If no publication of the “Future of Frodsham” survey proves possible by the next FTC meeting, P&PC recommends that FTC takes responsibility and publishes the results promptly, placing them in the public domain. Withdrawn in the light of subsequent developments.</i> <i>R2: FTC agrees the revised Lone Working Policy. Agreed</i> <i>R3: FTC agrees the revised Exit Interview policy. Agreed</i></p>
	E: Community	<p>Cllr Pusey described work underway on improving public signage at Council assets in Frodsham. He asked for views from councillors on the discussion that had taken place about what the new road signs for entering Frodsham should look like. There had been one that had been damaged some time ago, and a need to move the others when the boundaries changed.</p>

		<p>There was discussion about the merits of dot matrix and other formats. While there were opportunities and merits arising from new formats, on balance the Committee had decided that a traditional black and gold sign was the way to go. Councillors agreed that the Committee's view should prevail.</p> <p>Clerk/Service Manager to look at costs of hiring/buying matrix signs in case required in future.</p> <p>Minutes 20.10.14 (5) – noted</p>
	F: WW1 Working Group	<p>Cllr Wales said that the exhibition at the Arts Centre, which had been very successful, was due to end 6 November.</p> <p>Commemorative bookmarks had been given out to schools.</p> <p>Further milestones that the Committee would look to mark in future would be centenary of the commencement of Conscription in 2016, and the end of the war in 2018.</p> <p>Record of Meeting – 15.10.14 (5) – noted</p>
	Mayors Report	<p>A written report had been circulated. Notable events included the silver platter that had been presented to Mrs Griffiths-Jones on the occasion of her 100th birthday, and the issue of commemorative certificates to the outgoing Junior Mayors.</p> <p>He described work underway to introduce the Duke of Edinburgh Award in Frodsham.</p>
c	Clerk	<p>The Clerk reminded all about the Remembrance events on the following Sunday at St Laurence's, and Tuesday at the war Memorial.</p>
d	CWAC	<p>Cllr Dawson reported that budgets had been set at CWAC, based on a planned zero percent increase. He warned that the end of the present Special Expenses regime might mean an increase for Council Tax in Frodsham.</p> <p>He reported events in the library, which was now able to provide free wifi and free E-books.</p> <p>The new speed limits on the A56 were now in place.</p> <p>Ellis lane – consultation work was underway at CWAC to consider an upgrade to a bridleway or BOAT. A formal round of consultation with residents was about to begin.</p> <p>CWAC were looking at the scope for improvements to cycle paths along the River Weaver. FTC would be consulted.</p> <p>Work was progressing to bring together the Arts Centre and Castle Park House management. There would soon be a need to have FTC involved in these discussions.</p> <p>Work on the Netherton pedestrian crossing was due to start 10 November. Efforts would be made to do work outside times of peak traffic flow. Similarly works at the swing bridge would try to avoid peak rush hours.</p> <p>Cllr Riley raised the question of s106 money due to Frodsham. The Chairman confirmed that the Clerk was in the process of writing to CWAC to get the ball rolling.</p> <p>She mentioned the plan to open an OPAL club in Frodsham, as part of the Older People. Active Lives programme. A large number of older residents stood to benefit. There was a need for volunteers to help, and Cllr Rely extended the request to residents to volunteer. A number had said in the Town Survey that they wished to.</p>

		<p>There would be a CWAC stall at the Christmas festival, focused on partnership, and there would be an emphasis on older people. Information would be provided on keeping warm etc.</p> <p>Cllr Riley said that takeup for the incubator space at Castle Park House had not yet been high – more businesses were welcome.</p> <p>Heads of terms had been agreed for the Goods Shed.</p> <p>Planning applications for St Hilda's and Forest Hills were to be called in.</p> <p>Air quality remained a problem around Fluin Lane. Levels of pollutants had recently tripped the limit that required action, and the Environmental Protection Team would be looking for the source of the problem. FTC had put money into a measurement machine at Manor House School – this showed that industrial levels were low.</p> <p>Winsford had put in place its Neighbourhood plan.</p>
168	Asset Management	
	A: Play Areas	<p>Ship Street: The Clerk had requested a range of valuations from the District Valuer, to take this forward. These might include the building of market, retirement or affordable homes.</p> <p>Cllr Dawson suggested that this might present an opportunity for FTC to get involved in running Salt Works Farm. There could perhaps be a discussion about transfer of the asset as part of this deal.</p> <p>In the meantime, it was agreed that the Clerk write to CWAC to begin the process of getting the covenant lifted. Cllrs Riley and Dawson took no part in the vote.</p> <p>Churchfields: FTC was due to hear the outcome of the Veolia bid in December. There were no present plans to reapply to WREN.</p>
	B: Park Lane Sale	Lawyers were in contact, and the sale was proceeding.
	C: Office Accommodation	Discussions on a move to Castle Park House were proceeding.
169	Strategy Management	
	A: Strategic Vision for FTC	<p>The chairman had rewritten the strategy document, taking into account feedback received. It has reflected changes since the first draft – such as completion of the swing bridge. The Neighbourhood Plan would be able to take advantage of the vision outlined in this statement.</p> <p>The Chairman outlined some of the thinking behind the document – WHY did we do some of the things we do? What were the functions of Committees for example? What could we do more of, or try doing less of?</p> <p>He asked all Councillors to take time to read and to comment on the draft. He stressed this was a business strategy document, not one focused mainly on finance. The draft Business Plan for 2015-16 circulated by the Clerk by contrast, was intended to highlight actions for next year, which might have financial consequences.</p> <p>On this, councillors were again asked for feedback. Heads of Committee were due to meet 13 November to agree a draft budget. FTC would see this at the November meeting.</p>
	B: Neighbourhood Plan	<p>The Chairman was planning to speak to neighbouring councils such as Kingsley, to see if any wished to join in our Neighbourhood Plan.</p> <p>In the meantime it was agreed that the Clerk would formally notify CWAC that Frodsham was due to begin on its Neighbourhood Plan. An early stage would be setting up a steering group – Clerk to research what was required.</p>

		The Clerk was to tell Cheshire Community Action that FTC wished to take advantage of any free help it might give in getting started.
170	Finance	
	A. Paid Expenditure B. Received Income C. Bank Reconciliation	All noted.
	D: Budget Report	The Clerk had issued a half-year position report. There were currently some significant underspends, with few overspends. Some were timing issues – for example spending on the pedestrian crossings would come late in the year. It was hoped the report would help councillors take a view on spending performance so far, and would inform the setting of next year's budgets. Cllr Shearn asked why last year's VAT refund had not been received. The Clerk explained that this was late and had been chased more than once with HMRC. He might need to chase again.
171	Consultations	None
172	Items for Next Agenda	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service Medals • Vision for Frodsham • FTC and s 106 • Budget Discussion Feedback was invited from Councillors on the new format agenda.
173	Date of Next Meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monday 24 November 2014
Part B		<i>Cllr Pennington, Mrs Scriven & Mrs Catt left at this point.</i>
174	Staffing	Cllr Taylor, introducing the documents which had been circulated, set the background to this discussion, which related to the reorganisation of the office, and increased responsibilities for staff members. It was agreed to defer consideration of this matter to a special Extraordinary Meeting to be convened later in the month.
175	Park Lane Sale	See above – no Part B business.
176	London Road Allotments.	Brief update from the Chairman.
Meeting concluded at 10.30		

Signed: _____

Jon Wild, Town Clerk

Date: _____