

Town Clerk: Hazel Catt

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Frodsham Town Council

Castle Park, Frodsham,
Cheshire WA6 6SB



**Minutes of
THE ANNUAL TOWN MEETING
held on
Saturday 14 May 2016
In Castle Park House, Castle Park, Frodsham**

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

In Attendance: Cllr A Dawson (CWAC), 10 members of the public and a member of the press.

No	Item	
1	Apologies for Absence	Cllrs R Knowles and F Sutton
2	To note the minutes of the ATM	The minutes of the last Annual Town Meeting held on 23 May 2015 were agreed and signed as a true record.
3	Matters Arising	There were no matters arising.
4	Report by Chairman (2015-16) of Frodsham Town Council, on the Council's work and achievements for the year April 2015 to March 2016	Cllr J Critchley thanked everyone for attending and outlined the highs and lows of the year. Lows included the issues relating to our tenancy of Castle Park House and having to increase the precept. Highs included the Churchfield play area, Over 70s vouchers being raised to £10, the Newsletter which is distributed to every house, the bench on the Memorial Field to commemorate WW1 and the Festival of Walks. She thanked the staff team and Chairs of Committees for all their hard work throughout the year.
5	To receive the draft Town Council Accounts for the year ending 31 March 2016	The Annual Report, including the Accounts and other Council Reports, was distributed and noted. The Accounts are still subject to External Audit. No questions were asked about the accounts. Mr N Smith suggested that it would be useful to include the budget against the current year's expenditure – TC will consider this for next year's report.
6	Reports from Chairs of Committees (2015-16) of Frodsham Town Council, including working groups, on work and achievements during the year 2015-16. Written reports were included in the Annual Report.	
6.1	Planning	Cllr S Wakefield remind everyone that FTC only advises on application – decisions are made by CWAC. The planning application for the development at Mersey View had taken up a lot of the committee time.

6.2	Environment	Cllr A Oulton thanked the members of the public who are members of the Environment Committee for their valued contributions, both at the meeting and volunteering in the community. The leasing of the van has raised the profile of FTC and has saved the Council money as the Facilities Manager is able to do more of the small jobs where we would have need to bring in contractors before. We have purchased a small track leading to Hob Hey Wood to improve access and this will be upgraded during the coming year. Also we will probably need to carry out a survey of all our trees following the discovery of significant rot and fungus in a tree at Manley Road Copse. He thanked the Facilities Manager and other staff within the office for all their hard work.
6.3	Policy & Process	Cllr J Critchley, in Cllr Sutton's absence, reported that much of the year had been taken up carrying out Organisational Review looking at staffing and accommodation. The review of policies and procedures is underway and on-going. We will advertising the Town Clerk post during the next few weeks with the support of CHALC
6.4	Community	Cllr L Brown gave highlights of the committees successes including the redevelopment of the area by the Bowling Green on Ship to make a community orchard and picnic area. New signs had been erected to mark the new boundaries of the town and also on each of the recreation and play area. During this year the 4 old BT telephone boxes we have adopted will be renovated and defibrillators installed. She thanked the staff for all their hard work.
6.5	Communications	Cllr M Poulton, in Cllr R Knowles absence, reported that we have brought back the hard copy newsletter to meet the need of those who do not use IT. We have also improved the website and are making better use of facebook to get our messages out to the general public. There is still a lot of work needed on the IT side. He thanks the Office Manager for all her hard work especially on the website.
6.6	WW1 Commemorative Group	Cllr S Wakefield explained that the Working Group was set up to run for 4 year and continues to develop ideas to commemorate those who lost their lives in WW1. This year ahs seen the reprinting of the 'From Battlefield to Blighty' book and this summer will see the development of a Wall of Poppies at the medical centre. She thanked all the volunteers on the Working Group for their hard work and dedication.
6.7	Festival of Walks	Cllr M Poulton thanked all the volunteers involved in making this week long walking festival such a great success. Without the volunteers it wouldn't happen. He also thank Anne, Office Manager, for her hard work in pulling everything together and ensuring everything went to plan.

7	Reports from other organisations	<p>Cllr A Dawson, CWAC, explained that Frodsham had been hit hardest by removal of the New Homes Bonus and reduction in the special expense regime which mean that the Council Tax had risen more than 5%. The current Chief Executive is retiring and Gerald Meehan has been appointed as his replacement. Changes in the governance structure of Castle Park House are being developed to make it more independent of CWAC. This meeting could call for a referendum over fracking if it so wished and FTC would have to pay for it. Halton Curve will have a big impact on car parking in Frodsham so there are to be 2 consultation events in June.</p>
8	Neighbourhood Plan – update on progress to date.	<p>Mr M Warren gave a presentation about the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group and where it is up to in developing the Plan. Copies of the Powerpoint presentation are in Appendix A. The Plan must be evidence based and will be presented to Frodsham in a Referendum before going to be Independently Examined before becoming a Statutory Document. As the Plan is developed the Steering Group will undertake consultation events to gauge public opinion. Mr Dean was concerned that there was no information about the Neighbourhood Plan on FTC's website. The Town Clerk suggested that the minutes of the Steering Group meetings could be reported to FTC along the lines of the WW1 Commemorative Group and information added to our website.</p> <p>Several people in the audience had offered to join the Steering Group but had not heard anything – Mark will follow this up with the Steering Group Co-ordinator. The Plan can't determine big things like fracking or wind farms but could express a desire for the development of sustainable energy solutions, sustainable transport, retail mix and affordable housing. Mr J Nield stated that the heritage of Frodsham needed protecting.</p> <p>There is no hard data yet that Neighbourhood Plans are effective or how they have been used in other areas. Concern was expressed that Planning Officers would ignore the Plan if they wanted to. Cllr Dawson explained that the Neighbourhood Plan was part of a jigsaw of issues that Planning Officers had to give weight to when considering new developments. Generally the meeting felt the Neighbourhood Planning process needed a re-launch.</p>
9	Issues from members of the public to consider.	
9.1	Mersey View Development	<p>Mr J Nield asked where things were up to with the development. Cllr S Wakefield outlined that the original application was refused by CWAC but on appeal the Secretary of State had approved it. There were issues relating to a covenant and FTC is looking into this. Mrs T Footitt stated that it didn't matter who owned the land</p>

		they had a duty to comply with the covenant. Currently Cllrs Pennington and M Nield are researching this and will bring a report to FTC in June.
9.2	Financial Management	Mr N Smith stated that he was optimistic for the future but FTC should listen more to the people. He still has concerns over profligate spending. The Town Clerk explained that FTC was introducing a Financial Scrutiny Committee which would examine spend against budget on a quarterly basis and hold Committee Chairs to account.
9.3	Poor Turnout	Many people were concerned that there were so few residents present at the meeting. It was thought that it hadn't been advertised sufficiently, that weekends were not a good time and that information in the press over the last year had probably put people off. Communications Committee will be asked to look into this and identify how to engage better with the residents.
10	Any other business	No other business.

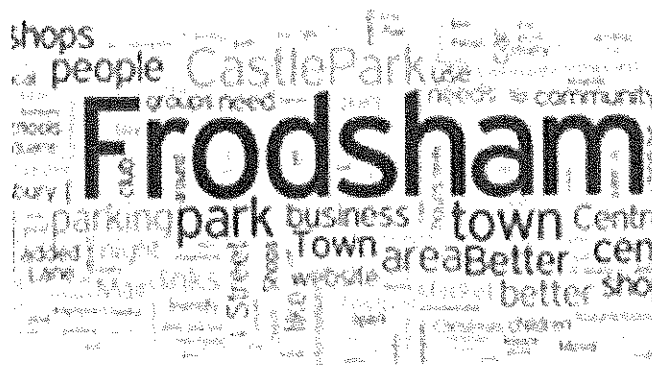
The meeting ended at 3pm.

Hazel Catt, Town Clerk

APPENDIX A – Frodsham Neighbourhood Plan

Frodsham Neighbourhood Plan

Presentation by:
Mark Warren
March 2016



What is a Neighbourhood Plan?

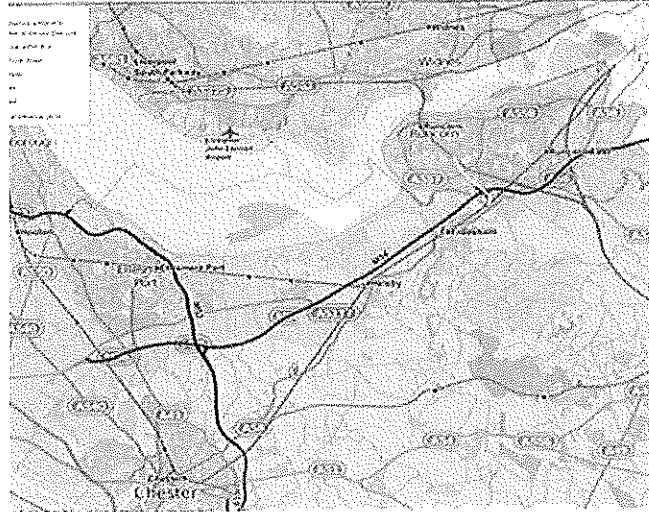
*A plan drawn up by a
community that sets out
a shared vision and
policies to shape future
growth and development
of the local area*



Why does Frodsham need one?

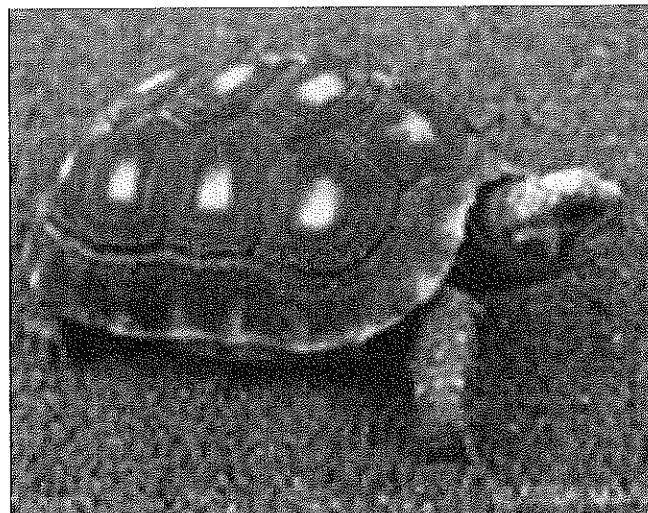
It can be a powerful means to ensure we get:

- The right types of development
- In the right places
- For our community



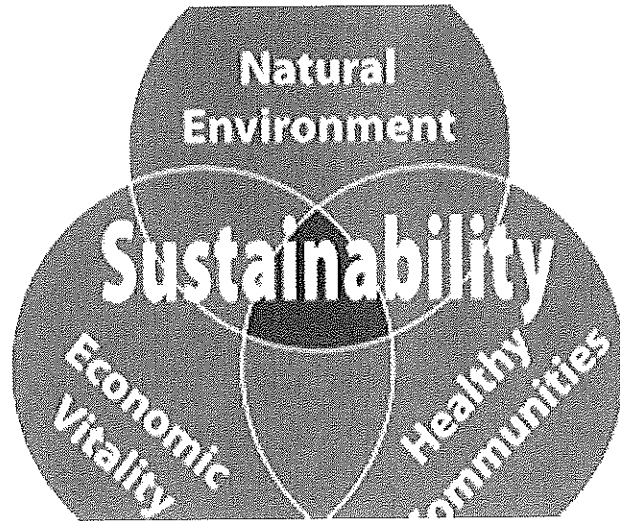
Since the initial presentation in May 2015

- Frodsham has elected a new Town Council
- The Steering Group for the plan has met 6 times, but...
- Attendance has been poor
- Feedback from Councillors has been limited



We are proposing the following vision

- Frodsham will:**
- Be thriving and sustainable**
 - Value its community and heritage**
 - Encourage innovation, collaboration and social cohesion**
 - Promote access to services**



And these Aims:

- Thriving & Sustainable**
To ensure that Frodsham has a sustainable demographic profile with services that support that profile and enable the community / town to prosper
- Community & Heritage**
To generate a pride in our community and maintain a broad range of activities that respects our cultural and physical heritage
- Innovation / cohesion / collaboration**
To promote activities that encourage community cohesion and support innovation whilst working in partnership
- Access**
Promote the infrastructure and access to services that support the above / our objectives



Points to note

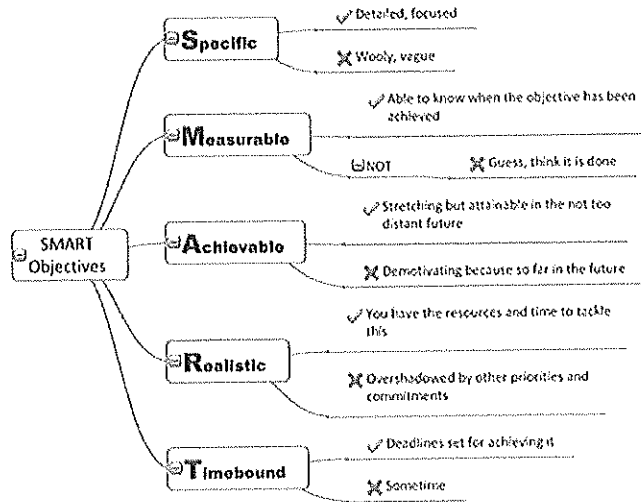
Several developers have been in contact and we have responded :

The Neighbourhood Plan objectives are currently being formulated, and once agreed will be made available

There will be no one-to-one meetings with developers;

Open sessions to enable the local community to understand how any proposed developments meet the Neighbourhood Plan objectives

These Objectives are clearly important and CWAC are helping us formulate them



To complete the Plan will take around 2 years but will need:

- Active & sustained support from Town Councillors
- Engagement with the Community, Developers and CWAC
- Agreement on who does what (consultations etc)

