



# Frodsham

## TOWN COUNCIL

Annual Town Council Meeting

18<sup>th</sup> May 2026

Meeting Pack

### Contents

Agenda item		
Agenda		
11		Clerk's Report 2025-2026
12		Annual Finance Report 2025-2026
16		Schedule of Meetings 2026-2027
18		DBS Report
24		Meeting Minutes (23 <sup>rd</sup> March 2026)
28		Christmas Voucher Scheme 2025
30		Consideration of Restrictions on the Chair of FTC

Please note that, at the time of preparing the meeting pack, no reports have been submitted by either Cheshire West and Chester Councillors or Frodsham's PCSO. These will be circulated to all councillors and published on the website once they are received. The current Chair, Cllr H Hayes, will present a report at the meeting.



SIGNED:

*Jo O'Donoghue (FSLCC)*

TOWN CLERK

DATE: 13/05/2026

## **ANNUAL TOWN COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA**

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### **1. Election of Chair**

- (a) To elect the Chair to serve until the Annual Meeting of the Council in May 2027
- (b) To receive the Declaration of Acceptance of Office from the elected Chair

### **2. Election of Vice Chair**

- (a) To elect the Vice Chair to serve until the Annual Meeting of the Council in May 2027
- (b) To receive the Declaration of Acceptance of Office from the elected Vice Chair

### **3. Apologies for absence**

To approve apologies for absence

### **4. Declarations of interest**

To note any declarations of interest.

### **5. Approval of Absence under Section 85 of the Local Government Act 1972**

- (a) To consider approving a dispensation for Councillor Pennington to be exempt from the requirement to attend meetings of the Council until the local elections in May 2027.
- (b) Section 85(1) of the Local Government Act 1972, Section 85 provides that where a member of a local authority fails, throughout a period of six consecutive months from the date of their last attendance, to attend any meeting of the authority, they shall cease to be a member of the authority unless the failure to attend was due to a reason approved by the authority before the expiry of that six-month period.
- (c) Council is therefore requested to consider whether it wishes to approve the continued absence of Councillor Pennington until the local elections in May 2027, thereby preventing automatic disqualification under Section 85(1) of the Local Government Act 1972.

### **6. Public Open Forum**

To invite members of the public to speak on items on the agenda.

### **7. PCSO report**

To note the report from PCSO N Flanagan.

### **8. Frodsham Leisure Centre**

To receive an update from Anna Ranger (Economic Growth Programme Manager – Leisure and Market Towns)

### **9. Cheshire West & Chester Councillors**

To note the report provided by Cllr M Garvey and Cllr L Sumner.

### **10. Chair's report 2025-2026**

To receive the report from Cllr Hayes together with reflections for the future.

## 11. Clerk's Report 2025-2026

To note the Clerk's Report with an overview of the highlights from 2025-2026 from each of the Committees.

## 12. Annual finance report

To note the report from J O'Donoghue (Town Clerk & RFO) which was also noted at the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on 20/04/2026.

## 13. Standing Orders

To note that the Standing Orders (NALC Model) are required to be updated annually and the last update took place on at the council meeting held 28/07/2025. Minute reference FTC/28/07/2025/10b. No further updates are required as of the date of this meeting: <https://frodsham.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2026/05/Standing-Orders-2025-2026.pdf>

## 14. Finance Regulations

To note that the Finance Orders (NALC Model) are required to be updated annually and the last update took place on at the council meeting held 23/03/2026 and para 7.4 was revised. Minute reference FTC/23/03/2026/10d. No further updates are required as of the date of this meeting: <https://frodsham.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2026/05/FTC-Finance-Regulations-2025-26-updated-23-03-2026.pdf>

## 15. Complaints Procedure/Policy

To note that the Complaints Procedure (NALC Model) was approved at the council meeting held on 30/06/2025. Minute reference 30/06/2025/11a. No further updates are required until June 2027: <https://frodsham.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/07/Complaints-Policy-2025.pdf>

## 16. Schedule of meetings

To approve the schedule of meetings provided by the Clerk.

## 17. General Power of Competence

To note that Frodsham Town Council satisfies the eligibility criteria for the General Power of Competence under the Localism Act 2011, section 1, and the Parish Councils (General Power of Competence) (Prescribed Conditions) Order 2012 (SI 2012/965), namely that:

- at the relevant election held in 2023, at least two-thirds of the members of the Council were elected; and
- the Clerk to the Council holds the Certificate in Local Council Administration (CiLCA), being the prescribed qualification.

Accordingly, the Council continues to hold the General Power of Competence until the next relevant annual meeting following ordinary elections, at which time eligibility will be reviewed in May 2027.

## 18. DBS Checks for Councillors and Officers

- a) To note the report provided by the Town Clerk.
- b) To approve the recommendation of the Town Clerk that no further action in respect of DBS checks for Councillors and Officers is required at the present time.

## 19. Appointment to committees

- a) To appoint members to the Amenities & Planning Committee
- b) To appoint members to the Events Committee
- c) To appoint members to the Finance & General Purposes Committee
- d) To appoint members to the Staffing Committee

## 20.Appointment of representatives & delegates to external organisations

- (a) Red Lion Bowling Club
- (b) Protos (Ince Marshes Air Quality Forum)
- (c) Castle Park Trust
- (d) Liverpool Airport Consultative Committee
- (e) Cheshire Association of Local Councils
- (f) North Cheshire Rail Users Group
- (g) Wind Farm Community Liaison Committee
- (h) Frodsham Youth Association
- (i) Weaver Navigation Society
- (j) Weaver & Sandstone Cycle Forum
- (k) PCC Parish & Town Council Meetings
- (l) Brio Future Offer

## 21.Year end internal audit 2025-2026 *(note that if the report has not been received by 13/05/2026 it will be necessary to convene an extra ordinary meeting and that the meeting must take place by 30/06/2026 under statutory regulations)*

- (a) To note the report provided by JDH Business Services (appointed Internal Auditor to Frodsham Town Council)
- (b) To agree actions to be taken recommended within the report.

## 22.Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2025-2026 (AGAR) *(note that if the IA report has not been received by 13/05/2026 it will be necessary to convene an extra ordinary meeting and that the meeting must take place by 30/06/2026 under statutory regulations)*

- (a) To approve and sign Section 1 Annual Governance Statement 2025/2026
- (b) To approve and sign Section 2 Accounting Statement 2025/2026 which has been signed by the Clerk prior to the meeting

## 23.Exercise of public rights

To approve the period for the Exercise of Public Rights and the publication of the unaudited Annual Governance and Accountability Return commencing as soon as practicable following approval of the AGAR and no later than Wednesday 1 July 2026, ending on Tuesday 11 August 2026, in accordance with statutory regulations.

## 24.Meeting minutes

To approve the minutes from the meeting held 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2026.

## 25.Accounts

- (a) To note that the precept of £300,309.00 was received on 13<sup>th</sup> April 2026.
- (b) To approve a councillor to check April/May 2026 bank statements against April/May 2026 bank reconciliation reports on a date to be agreed.
- (c) To approve the following monthly direct debits for the 2026-27 financial year

Organisation	Purpose	Amount (GBP)
PENINSULA BUSINESS	HR SLA	£149.50
TELECOMS (Prism)	Office phone/broadband	VARIABLE
PRISM BUSINESS DEV	IT SLA	£646.58
BAGNALL & MORRIS	Cemetery waste	£162.90
BRITISH GAS	Cemetery electricity	VARIABLE
HM LAND REGISTRY	Land searches	VARIABLE

- (d) To approve the following monthly contractual payments

Detail	Purpose	Amount (GBP)
STAFF SALARIES	CONTRACTURAL	VARIABLE
STAFF PENSIONS	CONTRACTURAL	VARIABLE
HMRC PAYMENTS	EMPLOYMENT LEGISLATION	VARIABLE
NTC GROUNDS MAINTENANCE SLA	CONTRACTURAL	£ 3,554.20 (PLUS WATERING HANGING BASKETS (VARIABLE))
RABBIT DIGITAL SLA	CONTRACTURAL	£120.00
CHESHIRE WEST	44 Main Street Office rates	TO BE CONFIRMED
EDF	44 Main Street Office electricity	VARIABLE
44 MAIN STREET	44 Main Street Office rent	£850.00
CANDA COPYING LTD	Photocopier	VARIABLE
PRISM LTD	IT services	VARIABLE

(e) To approve the following for the 2026-27 financial year

Detail	Amount
ChALC affiliation fee	£1,592.00
NABMA annual subs	£384.00
ICO Annual fee	£40.00
Cheshire Community Action	£110.00
Frodsham Community Association	£15.00
National Allotment Society	£55.00
ICCM	£100.00

## 26. Staffing

- To approve the recommendation from both the Staffing Committee Meeting held on held on 13th April 2026 and the Finance & General Purposes Committee Meeting held on 20/04/2026 to appoint a part-time Administration Officer on a 20-hour-per-week, two-year temporary contract to oversee the administration of Tarvin Road Cemetery, along with other administrative responsibilities, including the management of allotments, defibrillators, and related duties.
- To note that the appointment of an Administration Officer on the SLCC recommended salary scale SCP 13–17 (FTE £28,163; £15.06/hour at SCP 13) for 20 hours per week, represents an actual salary of £15,662.40 plus employer on-costs (NI £1,599.36 and LGPS £3,210.79), giving a total annual cost of £20,472.55, to be funded from the existing £44,000 earmarked staffing reserve over the two-year contract period.

## 27. Freedom of Frodsham

To consider whether to award the Freedom of Frodsham to a qualifying resident in 2026.

## 28. Christmas Voucher Scheme

To note the report provided.

## 29. Frodsham Town Council/Frodsham Youth Association/Frodsham Community Association Lease

- To note there has been no change/update to the current lease arrangements.

- b) To agree any action to be taken.

### **30. Consideration of Restrictions on the Chair of the Council**

- a) To note the report provided by the Clerk.
- b) To approve the recommendation of the Town Clerk, acting as Proper Officer, Legal Officer and Responsible Financial Officer, that no amendments be made to the current governance arrangements or Standing Orders relating to the Chair of the Council, as the existing arrangements remain appropriate and consistent with the NALC Model Standing Orders adopted by the Council on 28<sup>th</sup> July 2025 (minute reference FTC/28/07/2025/10b).

### **31. Exclusion of press and public** *(please note that this item may not be required subject to agenda item 25)*

To consider that, in accordance with section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960, and as extended by Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, the public, including the press, be excluded from the meeting because of the confidential nature of the following business to be transacted.

### **32. Freedom of Frodsham Nominations** *(please note that this item may not be required subject to agenda item 25)*

- a) To receive nominations from Councillors.
- b) To agree action to be taken.

### **33. Close of meeting**



Across the Full Town Council meetings held between May 2025 and March 2026, Frodsham Town Council delivered a wide range of governance, financial, community safety, civic pride and strategic planning achievements. The period was characterised by strengthened governance, significant community engagement, improvements to financial oversight, support for local initiatives, and proactive responses to planning and regeneration matters.

### ***Governance and Organisational Development***

The Council successfully established its governance structure for 2025–2026 at the Annual Meeting in May 2025, appointing committee memberships and representatives to a range of external organisations.

A number of important governance and policy improvements were approved during the year, including:

- Adoption of updated Finance Regulations aligned with the Procurement Act 2023 and Procurement Regulations 2024.
- Adoption of revised Standing Orders and safeguarding policies.
- Approval of a Risk Assessment for 2025–2026.
- Approval of policies relating to councillor contact information and GDPR-compliant recording of meetings.
- Continued commitment to transparency through ongoing audio recording and publication of meeting transcripts.

The Council also signed and reaffirmed its commitment to the Civility & Respect Pledge and the Councillor Code of Conduct.

### ***Financial Management and Accountability***

Strong financial governance was maintained throughout the year. Key achievements included:

- Approval of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) for 2024–2025.
- Successful completion of internal audits with no governance or procurement concerns identified.
- Ongoing monthly financial monitoring, bank reconciliations and budget oversight across all meetings.
- Approval of the 2026–2027 Revenue Budget (£336,997), earmarked reserves (£229,698), and precept requirement (£300,309).
- Improvement of financial procedures through amendments to payment authorisation processes in line with banking requirements.

### ***Community Safety and Public Protection***

The Council played a proactive role in supporting community safety initiatives:

- Supported the development of the Frodsham Pubwatch scheme, including discussion of funding for radio communications between pubs and police partners.
- Worked closely with Cheshire Police and PCSOs regarding anti-social behaviour, illegal electric bikes, fireworks misuse and public safety concerns.
- Agreed to adopt and maintain the listed telephone kiosk on Main Street, relocate a defibrillator into the kiosk and install a bleed kit to improve emergency response facilities.

### ***Planning and Strategic Representation***

The Council actively represented residents' concerns regarding major planning and development proposals:

- Submitted a detailed response to the Dig Lane development application for 91 dwellings, raising concerns about highways, Green Belt impact, infrastructure and public rights of way.
- Agreed to organise future public discussions on the emerging Cheshire West and Chester Local Plan.
- Supported resident engagement in the Community Governance Review regarding councillor numbers and ward boundaries.
- Continued engagement regarding Frodsham Solar proposals and arranged future meetings with planning and environmental stakeholders.

### ***Town Centre, Markets and Economic Activity***

A major area of focus during the year was the future of Frodsham Market and town centre activity:

- Conducted business consultation work relating to the Artisan Market and its impact on local businesses.
- Introduced governance arrangements and licensing for the Artisan Market, including annual fee reviews and earmarking income to increase grant funding capacity.
- Considered and approved participation in the auction process relating to the historic Frodsham Market Charter.
- Undertook detailed due diligence, financial assessment and governance reviews before proceeding with the market charter bidding process.

### ***Community Engagement and Civic Pride***

The Council increased resident engagement and volunteer participation throughout the year:

- Held volunteer recruitment events to support Civic Pride activities, resulting in residents volunteering to support local initiatives.
- Worked collaboratively with local organisations, businesses, community groups and partner agencies.
- Continued support for community organisations through grants, representation and partnership working.

### ***Property, Assets and Infrastructure***

The Council progressed several important operational and infrastructure matters:

- Advanced plans for relocating the Town Council office to more suitable accommodation in Frodsham town centre.
- Approved updated Asset Registers and completed physical verification of council assets.
- Undertook insurance and risk management reviews to ensure assets and operations remained appropriately protected.
- Continued oversight of Green Gates Community Park maintenance and future improvements.

### ***Leisure and Wellbeing***

The Council engaged with Cheshire West and Chester Council and Brio Leisure on the redevelopment of Frodsham Leisure Centre and Library:

- Received detailed progress reports on the £6 million redevelopment project.

- Agreed to facilitate further public engagement regarding the project and future funding considerations.

Overall, the Full Town Council meetings demonstrated a strong emphasis on good governance, financial responsibility, public engagement, community safety, and protecting and enhancing Frodsham's long-term interests.

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## **Frodsham Town Council Events Committee**

### ***Significant Achievements Report 2025–2026***

#### ***Introduction***

This report highlights the significant achievements, activities and outcomes delivered by the Frodsham Town Council Events Committee during the 2025–2026 municipal year. Throughout the year, the Committee successfully planned, organised and supported a broad programme of community events designed to increase civic pride, strengthen community engagement, support local businesses and encourage volunteering across the town.

The Committee demonstrated strong collaboration with community organisations, volunteers, local businesses, Cheshire West and Chester Council, Castle Park Arts Centre and external event providers. Despite budgetary and operational challenges, the Committee delivered a varied and successful events programme while also laying strong foundations for an expanded programme of events in 2026–2027.

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#### ***Key Achievements During 2025–2026***

##### ***1. Successful Delivery of the 2025 Food & Drink Festival***

One of the most significant achievements of the year was the successful organisation and delivery of the 2025 Food & Drink Festival.

The Committee coordinated all aspects of the event including:

- Event planning and logistics
- Procurement of marquees, PA systems, toilets, barriers and waste management
- Coordination of demonstrations and entertainment
- Risk assessments and compliance with Cheshire West and Chester Council requirements
- Engagement with local traders and businesses
- Budget management

The event was delivered within budget, with expenditure of approximately £2,229 against an allocated budget of £3,000.

The festival was widely praised by members of the public and local businesses. Reports presented to the Committee confirmed:

- Approximately 2,000 visitors attended throughout the day
- More than 500 people attended demonstration sessions within the marquee
- Positive footfall impacts were experienced by local businesses
- Feedback from attendees was extremely positive

The success of the event demonstrated the Committee's growing capacity to organise large-scale public events safely and effectively.

The Committee also successfully produced formal post-event reports and financial reviews to support continuous improvement and future planning.

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## **2. Development and Delivery of the “Picnic in the Park” Community Event**

Following the decision not to proceed with a large-scale Frodsham Festival in 2025 due to time constraints, the Committee successfully designed and delivered an alternative community-focused event: “Picnic in the Park”.

The event represented a major achievement due to the scale of coordination involved. The Committee organised:

- Family entertainment activities
- Inflatable attractions
- Face painters
- A community dog show
- Volunteer support arrangements
- Medical and first aid provision
- Public safety arrangements
- Stage entertainment and decoration
- Community organisation participation
- Event management planning and risk assessments

The event received highly positive feedback from attendees, community groups and participants. The Committee undertook structured reviews and feedback exercises after the event to identify lessons learned and opportunities for future improvement.

Importantly, the event demonstrated strong partnership working with organisations including:

- Girlguiding groups
- Tail Mates Dog Show organisers
- Community Medics
- Local volunteers
- Independent Street Events Ltd

The Committee also ensured inclusive community participation through free activities, provision of refreshments and family-friendly entertainment.

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## **3. Strengthening Community Engagement and Volunteer Participation**

Throughout the year, the Committee significantly strengthened engagement with local residents, volunteers and community organisations.

Key achievements included:

- Greater public attendance and participation at community events
- Positive public feedback at Committee meetings
- Increased involvement from local organisations and charities
- Improved collaboration with local businesses
- Enhanced visibility of the Town Council within the community

The Committee also explored ways to improve volunteering opportunities through:

- Consideration of a Volunteer Recruitment Event
- Formation of working groups

- Community engagement exercises
- Discussions around expanding volunteer participation in future events

Although the standalone Volunteer Event was not progressed as originally intended, the work undertaken contributed towards wider community involvement in future event planning.

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#### **4. Effective Financial Management and Budget Control**

The Committee demonstrated strong financial oversight throughout the year.

Key achievements included:

- Delivery of major events within agreed budgets
- Careful monitoring of expenditure
- Effective use of existing resources and surplus funding
- Strategic budget planning for future years
- Consideration of long-term event sustainability

Examples of sound financial management included:

- Using surplus funding from prior events to support delivery of the Food & Drink Festival
- Reviewing event expenditure regularly through finance reports
- Splitting and allocating the 2026–2027 events budget strategically across multiple events
- Securing external support and contributions where possible

The Committee also began early financial planning for the 2026 programme to ensure improved event readiness and sustainability.

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#### **5. Expansion of the 2026 Community Events Programme**

A major achievement during the latter part of the year was the significant expansion and forward planning of the 2026 events programme.

The Committee approved, developed or began planning for:

- Easter Trail 2026
- Medieval May Day Event 2026
- Food & Drink Festival 2026
- Picnic in the Park 2026
- Halloween Event 2026/27
- Support for the Festival of Walks 2026

The introduction of a new Medieval May Day Event represented a particularly ambitious and innovative addition to the events programme.

##### ***Planning work included:***

- Securing quotations for specialist medieval entertainment
- Development of management plans and risk assessments
- Coordination with Cheshire West and Chester Council
- Identification of event infrastructure requirements
- Formation of working groups

- Budget allocation and event design

This forward planning demonstrated the Committee's ambition to grow Frodsham's events programme and enhance the town's cultural and tourism offer.

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## **6. Support for Community Organisations and Partnerships**

The Committee worked closely with numerous organisations throughout the year.

Partnership achievements included:

### ***Frodsham Festival of Walks***

The Committee:

- Received and reviewed updates from the Festival of Walks Steering Group
- Recognised the success of the 2025 programme
- Approved funding support of £2,000 towards the 2026 event

### ***Castle Park Arts Centre***

The Committee strengthened relationships with Castle Park Arts Centre by:

- Inviting Trustees to Committee meetings
- Exploring collaborative opportunities
- Beginning discussions around coordinated annual event calendars
- Exploring joint promotional opportunities

### ***Rotary Club and Community Groups***

The Committee also:

- Supported Festival in the Park arrangements
- Worked with community organisations during Picnic in the Park
- Coordinated with local schools and voluntary groups
- Supported local heritage and remembrance activities

These partnerships significantly enhanced the reach and quality of community events.

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## **7. Delivery of Civic and Seasonal Events**

The Committee continued to support and coordinate a range of civic and seasonal activities throughout the year.

Achievements included:

### ***VE Day 80 Celebrations***

The Committee successfully supported VE Day 80 commemorations and managed associated expenditure responsibly.

### ***Remembrance Events***

The Committee coordinated arrangements for:

- Remembrance Sunday 2025
- The Remembrance Service on 11th November 2025
- Wreath provision
- Community refreshments

- Coordination with local clergy and musicians

### ***Halloween Events***

The Committee successfully organised and delivered the 2025 Halloween Event, including:

- Entertainment booking
- Face painting
- Ticketing arrangements
- Marketing and promotion
- Community engagement
- Event evaluation and planning for future years

### ***Christmas Festival Support***

The Committee supported preparations for the 2025 Christmas Festival and volunteer coordination.

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## **8. Improved Governance, Planning and Operational Management**

The Committee significantly strengthened its operational processes during the year.

Key governance and management achievements included:

- Introduction and use of detailed Events Management Plans
- Improved risk assessment procedures
- Enhanced coordination with external providers
- Development of event planning schedules
- Structured post-event reviews
- Better forward planning for future events
- Increased use of working groups to support event delivery

The Committee also improved coordination of:

- Volunteer rotas
- Event logistics
- Safety planning
- Public communications
- Marketing activity
- Venue coordination

These improvements helped establish stronger operational foundations for future years.

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## **Overall Impact**

The Events Committee made a substantial contribution to community life in Frodsham during 2025–2026.

The Committee successfully:

- Delivered high-quality community events
- Increased community participation
- Supported local businesses and organisations

- Enhanced civic pride
- Strengthened partnerships across the town
- Improved event governance and planning
- Expanded the future events programme
- Demonstrated effective financial stewardship

Importantly, the Committee created strong momentum for the continued growth and development of community events in Frodsham.

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## **Conclusion**

The 2025–2026 municipal year was a highly productive and successful period for the Events Committee.

Despite operational challenges and the need to adapt plans during the year, the Committee delivered a broad and ambitious programme of events which were well attended and positively received by the public.

The success of the Food & Drink Festival, Picnic in the Park and other community events demonstrated the Committee’s ability to deliver meaningful outcomes for residents while building stronger relationships with community groups, volunteers and partner organisations.

The Committee also laid important foundations for future growth through early planning, improved governance arrangements and the development of an expanded programme of events for 2026–2027.

Overall, the Committee’s work throughout 2025–2026 significantly enhanced community engagement, strengthened Frodsham’s community identity and contributed positively to the cultural and civic life of the town.

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## **Amenities & Planning Committee**

### **Significant Achievements Report 2025–2026**

During the 2025–2026 financial year, the Amenities & Planning Committee delivered a broad programme of work focused on improving public amenities, enhancing environmental sustainability, supporting community infrastructure, and ensuring robust planning oversight across Frodsham.

The following report summarises the Committee’s most significant achievements and key areas of progress.

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### **1. Strategic Planning and Development Oversight**

The Committee maintained an active and influential role in reviewing planning applications and protecting the character and interests of Frodsham. Throughout the year, the Committee considered a substantial number of planning applications, ranging from household developments to major strategic proposals.

Key achievements included:

- Working closely with the Frodsham Neighbourhood Plan Group to strengthen responses to larger and more complex applications.
- Preparing detailed objections to inappropriate or poorly supported developments, including:
  - the Dig Lane 91-dwelling proposal due to transport, safety and infrastructure concerns;

- the Hawthorne Road development proposal because of Green Belt impact, traffic concerns and effects on community assets.
- Supporting sustainable and heritage-sensitive developments where appropriate, including renewable energy and conservation-led schemes.
- Ensuring planning applications were assessed against relevant Local Plan and Neighbourhood Plan policies to safeguard community interests and environmental quality.

The Committee also actively engaged with consultations on:

- Cheshire West and Chester Council's new Local Plan;
- Local Transport Plan 4;
- low-carbon infrastructure and renewable energy policy development.

## **2. Investment in Play Areas and Community Facilities**

A major achievement during the year was the Committee's investment in play area improvements and community infrastructure.

Significant works approved included:

- replacement safety surfacing at Churchfields Play Area at a cost of £11,230;
- improvement works beneath the bridges at Churchfields Play Area;
- extensive maintenance and restoration works at Green Gates Community Park, including weeding, re-barking and grounds improvements.

The Committee also supported future enhancements to community play provision by:

- progressing plans for a toddler slide at Green Gates Community Park;
- exploring opportunities for accessible play equipment in partnership with Cheshire West and Chester Council.

These improvements demonstrated the Committee's ongoing commitment to safe, inclusive and attractive recreational facilities for families and residents.

## **3. Major Festive Lighting Upgrade**

One of the most visible achievements of the year was the significant upgrade to Frodsham's festive lighting infrastructure.

The Committee:

- commissioned essential electrical safety testing and infrastructure repairs;
- approved a £36,857 investment in replacement festive lighting for Main Street and High Street;
- later approved a further £16,046.65 for the second phase of replacement lighting on Church Street.

The upgraded displays received very positive public feedback and significantly improved the appearance of the town centre during the festive season.

## **4. Environmental and Woodland Initiatives**

The Committee made substantial progress in supporting biodiversity, woodland management and environmental sustainability.

Achievements included:

- supporting woodland management initiatives with the Woodland Trust, including invasive rhododendron removal and woodland restoration.
- overseeing woodland planting at Churchfields delivered through the “Trees for Climate” initiative with support from Mersey Forest.
- supporting Hob Hey Wood through volunteer partnership working and funding initiatives, including the annual calendar project that generates income for woodland maintenance.
- confirming the successful completion of a three-year Japanese knotweed eradication programme at Marshlands Tree Garden.
- progressing a formal Tree Planting Policy focused on native species and sustainable planting practices.

The Committee also worked proactively to maintain community orchards and woodland assets through the Grounds Maintenance SLA.

## **5. Grounds Maintenance and Asset Management**

The Committee successfully managed and reviewed the Council’s Grounds Maintenance Service Level Agreement with Northwich Town Council.

Key achievements included:

- negotiating an amended SLA for 2026–2027 that maintained service standards while achieving a reduction in annual contract costs;
- securing four additional maintenance visits to Green Gates Community Park at no additional cost;
- maintaining high standards at Tarvin Road Cemetery, which received positive public feedback during the year.
- addressing vandalism and infrastructure repairs, including repairs to the memorial path.

The Committee also introduced improved monitoring arrangements through the maintenance of vandalism and action logs.

## **6. Active Travel and Community Connectivity**

The Committee continued to support Active Travel and sustainable transport initiatives across the town.

Achievements included:

- supporting the installation of Active Travel map boards at Frodsham Station;
- participating in consultations regarding walking, cycling and transport improvements;
- allocating £250 to support local Active Travel projects and cycling route information.
- continuing work on improved wayfinding and town signage.

The Committee also worked with Cheshire West and Chester Council on community-led highways improvements and public realm initiatives.

## **7. Community Engagement and Partnership Working**

The Committee maintained strong working relationships with community organisations, volunteers and partner authorities throughout the year.

Examples included:

- collaboration with Frodsham WI regarding Manley Road Copse management;
- engagement with the Green Gates Community Project;
- ongoing liaison with Hob Hey Wood Friends Group;
- engagement with CWAC, Active Travel groups, Mersey Forest and Brio Leisure on strategic town projects.

The Committee also supported early discussions relating to the refurbishment of Frodsham Leisure Centre and Library and considered potential future Council support for the scheme.

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## **Conclusion**

During 2025–2026, the Amenities & Planning Committee delivered significant improvements across environmental management, community facilities, festive infrastructure, planning oversight and partnership working.

The Committee demonstrated a strong commitment to:

- protecting Frodsham’s character and Green Belt;
- improving public spaces and recreational facilities;
- supporting biodiversity and sustainability;
- strengthening community engagement; and
- investing in projects that enhance civic pride and quality of life for residents.

These achievements provide a strong foundation for continued improvement and investment in Frodsham during the coming financial year.

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## **Finance & General Purposes Committee**

### **Financial Year 2025–2026**

The Finance & General Purposes Committee (F&GP Committee) played a central role in supporting the effective governance, financial oversight, strategic planning, staffing management, policy development, and community investment activities of Frodsham Town Council throughout the 2025–2026 financial year. Across five formal meetings, the Committee demonstrated considerable input into both operational and strategic matters affecting the Council and wider community.

#### **1. Financial Governance and Accountability**

A core responsibility of the Committee was the oversight of the Council’s finances. At each meeting the Committee:

- Reviewed and approved monthly finance reports;
- Monitored income, expenditure, reserves, and account balances;
- Appointed councillors to undertake independent bank reconciliation checks; and
- Monitored the Council’s overall financial position throughout the year.

The Committee also considered detailed budget monitoring reports during the year and undertook substantial preparation work for the 2026–2027 budget setting process. This included reviewing budget submissions from other committees and approving the draft F&GP budget totalling £214,640.

In December 2025, the Committee undertook a detailed review of earmarked reserves and recommended a comprehensive reserves programme to Full Council, including allocations for cemetery extension works, office accommodation, memorial gardens, play area improvements, civic pride initiatives, and Christmas lighting.

The Committee further strengthened financial governance by:

- approving updated Finance Regulations following the implementation of the Procurement Act 2023 and Procurement Regulations 2024;
- reviewing audit outcomes and internal control measures; and
- implementing additional safeguards to prevent duplicate payments following the interim internal audit.

## **2. Strategic Office Accommodation and Asset Management**

The Committee undertook extensive work regarding the future accommodation needs of the Town Council.

During June 2025, the Committee agreed that the Town Clerk should investigate alternative office accommodation options and also explore the potential conversion of the cemetery building supported through a Public Works Loan.

Subsequent meetings considered:

- the financial implications of tenancy arrangements;
- public accessibility requirements;
- records management and disaster recovery considerations; and
- progression of lease negotiations for new premises at 44 Main Street.

The Committee ultimately recommended progressing the matter to an Extraordinary Full Council Meeting for formal decision-making on relocation.

## **3. Community Investment and Grants**

The Committee oversaw significant community support initiatives throughout the year.

### ***Grants Scheme***

The Committee:

- approved the 2025 Grants Scheme documentation and timetable;
- established a Grants Working Group involving all councillors;
- assessed applications exceeding the available budget allocation; and
- supported a range of local organisations and community projects.

This included direct support for:

- Cheshire Libraries' Summer Reading Challenge; and
- applications from local educational and community organisations.

### ***Christmas Voucher Scheme***

The Committee also managed and approved the 2025 Christmas Voucher Scheme, including:

- scheme design and operational timetable;
- engagement with local businesses and good causes;
- monitoring uptake levels; and
- oversight of reimbursement arrangements.

By October 2025:

- 800 valid vouchers had been received;
- 18 local businesses had registered; and
- 7 good causes had joined the scheme.

#### **4. Policy Development and Governance**

The Committee made considerable contributions to governance and policy modernisation during the year.

***Policies reviewed, updated, or approved included:***

- Complaints Policy;
- Recording Meetings Policy;
- Privacy Policy – Recording Meetings;
- Safeguarding Policy;
- Standing Orders;
- Finance Regulations; and
- Data Protection arrangements.

The Committee also approved the appointment of JDH Business Services as the Council's Data Protection Officer in February 2026.

These actions ensured the Council remained compliant with legislative requirements, strengthened transparency, and enhanced safeguarding and data protection arrangements.

#### **5. Civic Pride and Community Environment**

The Committee provided strong support to the Civic Pride initiative led through the Highways Volunteers Scheme.

***This work included:***

- coordinating volunteer-led environmental improvement activities;
- ensuring compliance with risk assessment and insurance requirements;
- approving equipment purchases; and
- supporting the promotion of activities through local media.

***Activities undertaken included:***

- cleaning around the war memorial;
- vegetation clearance;
- weeding at Station Approach;
- works at Church Entry; and
- ongoing public realm improvements across the town.

#### **6. Staffing and Organisational Development**

The Committee undertook substantial staffing and organisational responsibilities throughout the year.

***Key actions included:***

- approving overtime and contractual amendments for the Assistant Clerk;
- implementing nationally agreed pay awards;
- approving SCP progression following appraisal;
- supporting increased staffing hours;
- considering future staffing requirements; and
- recommending the creation of a Safeguarding Officer post.

The Committee also approved the establishment of an earmarked reserve to support future staffing requirements associated with safeguarding responsibilities.

## **7. Strategic Partnership and Lease Negotiations**

The Committee played a significant role in progressing negotiations relating to the Frodsham Youth Association and Frodsham Community Association lease arrangements.

Its work included decisions on:

- lease duration;
- insurance responsibilities;
- maintenance obligations;
- alterations clauses; and
- car park management arrangements.

The Committee approved a 99-year lease term and oversaw progression toward final Heads of Terms during 2025. This is ongoing.

## **Conclusion**

Throughout the 2025–2026 financial year, the Finance & General Purposes Committee demonstrated considerable and wide-ranging input into the governance and operation of Frodsham Town Council. Its work extended well beyond routine financial oversight and included strategic planning, governance reform, staffing development, community investment, environmental improvement initiatives, audit compliance, and major asset and accommodation decisions.

The Committee's proactive approach contributed significantly to maintaining strong governance standards, ensuring financial resilience, supporting local residents and organisations, and positioning the Council for future operational and strategic development.

## Frodsham Town Council

### Year-End Financial Report (2025/26)

Period: 1<sup>st</sup> April 2025 to 31 March 2026

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#### 1. Overview

The Council has delivered a strong financial performance in 2025/26, exceeding income expectations while maintaining overall expenditure control.

- **Total Income:** £350,203 (Budget: £332,646)
- **Total Expenditure:** £315,637 (Budget: £333,446)
- **Net Surplus:** £34,567 (Budget: £800)

This represents a positive variance of £35,367 against budget.

The Council also closed the year with £327,806 in current assets and £176,126 in general reserves, demonstrating strong financial stability.

#### 2. Key Achievements

##### 2.1 Strong Overall Financial Outturn

The Council achieved a significant surplus through:

- Higher-than-expected income
- Effective control of discretionary spending
- Strategic use of earmarked reserves

This places the Council in a robust financial position heading into 2026/27.

##### 2.2 Investment Income Performance

Investment returns significantly exceeded expectations:

- **CCLA Interest Income:** £17,674 vs £10,000 budget

This reflects strong treasury management and favourable market conditions.

##### 2.3 High-Performing Service Areas

###### Cemetery Operations

- Income: £27,205 (Budget: £20,000)
- Net surplus: £23,340

This service generated a £9,327 positive variance, driven primarily by burial fee income.

###### Allotments

- Net surplus: £928 (Budget: £525)

A modest but efficient and consistently positive contribution.

##### 2.4 Effective Cost Control in Key Areas

## **Civic & Democratic**

- Expenditure: £1,791 vs £6,500 budget
- Underspend: £4,709

This reflects reduced activity in areas such as consultations and member development.

## **Events Programme**

- Expenditure: £19,105 vs £40,200 budget
- Underspend: £21,095

Several planned events were delivered at lower cost or deferred, contributing significantly to the year-end surplus.

## **2.5 Strong Balance Sheet**

The Council maintains a healthy financial base:

- **Cash & Investments:** £323,547 (bank + CCLA)
- **Total Assets:** £327,806
- **General Reserves:** £176,126
- **Earmarked Reserves:** Held for strategic priorities (e.g., cemetery extension, play areas, office improvements)

This ensures resilience against future financial pressures.

## **3. Budget Variances**

### **3.1 Areas of Overspend**

Some service areas exceeded budget:

- **PAYE & NI:** +£3,839
- **IT Costs:** +£3,109
- **Telephone & Broadband:** +£667
- **Grounds Maintenance (Additional):** +£3,820

Additionally, some capital or project costs were not originally budgeted but funded through reserves:

- Christmas Lights (Amenities)
- Churchfields Safety Flooring

These were appropriately offset by earmarked reserves.

### **3.2 Areas of Underspend**

Significant underspends occurred in:

- Civic & Democratic activities
- Events programme
- Public consultations and member training

While financially positive, these may indicate:

- Deferred activity

- Capacity constraints
- Changes in delivery priorities

#### **4. Use of Reserves**

- **Transfers from Earmarked Reserves:** £56,585
- **Transfers to Reserves:** £777

Reserves were used appropriately to fund:

- One-off capital works
- Strategic projects
- Infrastructure improvements

The year resulted in a £90,375 increase in general reserves, strengthening financial resilience.

#### **5. Risks and Considerations**

##### **5.1 Cost Pressures**

Rising costs in:

- Staffing (PAYE/NI)
- IT and digital services
- Grounds maintenance

These may continue into future years and has been reflected in forward budgeting.

##### **5.2 Delivery Risk (Underspends)**

Large underspends in events and civic activities suggest:

- Potential delays in programme delivery
- Risk of under-delivering community outcomes

##### **5.3 Dependence on Reserve Funding**

While appropriate this year, reliance on reserves for:

- Major projects
- Unplanned expenditure

should be monitored to ensure long-term sustainability.

#### **6. Reserve Strategy**

- Maintain clear separation between operational and project funding
- Regularly review earmarked reserves to ensure alignment with priorities

#### **7. Conclusion**

The 2025/26 financial year represents a very positive outcome for the Council.

Key strengths include:

- Strong surplus position
- Excellent income performance
- Controlled overall expenditure
- Robust reserves and liquidity

The Council is therefore well positioned to deliver its priorities in 2026/27, with a solid financial foundation and capacity to invest in community outcomes.

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Signed: *Jo O'Donoghue* (FSLCC)

Town Clerk

Dated: 14/04/2026

**Dates of meetings in 2026-2027**

<b>2026-2027</b>	<b>MAY</b>	<b>JUN</b>	<b>JUL</b>	<b>AUG</b>	<b>SEP</b>	<b>OCT</b>	<b>NOV</b>	<b>DEC</b>	<b>JAN</b>	<b>FEB</b>	<b>MAR</b>	<b>APR</b>	<b>MAY</b>
ANNUAL TOWN MEETING @ 6.30	18												17
ANNUAL COUNCIL MEETING @ 7pm	18												17
FULL COUNCIL – 4 <sup>th</sup> Monday @ 7pm			27		28		23		25		22		
FULL COUNCIL – Budget setting @ 6.30pm									11				
AMENITIES & PLANNING – 2 <sup>nd</sup> Monday @ 7pm		8	13	10	14	12	9	14	11	8	8	12	10
EVENTS – usually 1 <sup>st</sup> Monday @ 7pm – check calendar for any changes		1	6	3	7	5	2	7	11	1	1	5	4
FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES @ 7pm 4 <sup>th</sup> Monday		22		17 <sup>1</sup>		26		14 <sup>2</sup>		22		26	

<sup>1</sup> Moved back one week due to bank holiday

<sup>2</sup> Moved forward one week due to Christmas holidays

**Report to Annual Meeting – 18 May 2026****Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Checks for Councillors and Officers****Report Author:** Town Clerk**Meeting Date:** 18 May 2026**Agenda Item:** 18/05/2026/18 DBS Councillors and Officers**1. Purpose of the Report**

The purpose of this report is to provide Members with clarification regarding the statutory position on Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks in relation to Town Councillors and Council Officers, and to seek approval of the recommendation that no further action is required at the present time.

**2. Background**

Questions have arisen regarding whether Councillors and Officers of the Council are required to undertake DBS checks as part of their roles. This report summarises the current legal framework governing DBS eligibility and the circumstances in which checks may lawfully be requested.

**3. Legal and Regulatory Position****3.1 Statutory Requirement**

There is no statutory requirement for Members of Frodsham Town Council, or for ordinary officers employed by the Council, to undertake DBS checks solely by virtue of their office or employment.

**3.2 Eligibility for Standard or Enhanced DBS Checks**

Eligibility for Standard and Enhanced DBS checks is governed by Part V of the Police Act 1997 and the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975.

Town Councillor roles, and ordinary administrative local council officer roles, are not prescribed positions under the legislation and therefore do not automatically qualify for Standard or Enhanced DBS checks.

**3.3 Regulated Activity**

DBS checks may only lawfully be sought where the duties attached to a role satisfy the statutory eligibility criteria. This includes circumstances where an individual undertakes regulated activity involving children or vulnerable adults.

Where such duties do not form part of the role, there is no lawful basis to request a Standard or Enhanced DBS certificate.

**3.4 Basic DBS Checks**

A Basic DBS check may be obtained under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. Such a check discloses only unspent convictions and conditional cautions.

A Basic DBS certificate does not disclose:

- spent convictions or cautions;
- arrests without conviction;
- barred list information; or
- local police intelligence.

#### **4. Considerations**

The Council should ensure that any use of DBS checking remains proportionate, lawful, and consistent with the statutory framework. Seeking checks where no eligibility exists could expose the Council to legal and data protection concerns.

At the present time, the normal duties of Councillors and Officers of Frodsham Town Council do not constitute regulated activity and do not otherwise meet the eligibility requirements for Standard or Enhanced DBS checks.

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#### **5. Financial Implications**

There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

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#### **6. Legal Implications**

The report reflects the current legislative framework governing DBS eligibility and the lawful processing of criminal records information.

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#### **7. Recommendation**

Members are requested:

- a) To note that there is no statutory requirement for members or ordinary officers of Frodsham Town Council to undertake Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks solely by virtue of their office or employment.
- b) To note that eligibility for Standard or Enhanced DBS checks is governed by Part V of the Police Act 1997 and the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975, under which town councillor roles, and ordinary administrative local council officer roles, are not prescribed positions.
- c) To note that DBS checks may only be sought where the duties of a role meet the statutory eligibility criteria, including where regulated activity with children or vulnerable adults is undertaken.
- d) To note that a Basic DBS check, under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, discloses only unspent convictions and conditional cautions and does not include spent convictions or cautions, arrests without conviction, barred list information, or local police intelligence.
- e) To consider and approve the recommendation of the Town Clerk that no further action in respect of DBS checks for Councillors and Officers is required at the present time.



Minutes from the **Full Council Meeting** held in Gallery 1, Castle Park Arts Centre, Castle Park, Frodsham, WA6 6SE on Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2026

**Attended by:** Cllr D Critchley, Cllr J Critchley, Cllr H Hayes (Chair), Cllr A Holman, Cllr Hook, Cllr Hughes, Cllr R Lofts (Vice Chair), Cllr Lowrie, Cllr Moorcroft, Cllr B Wade, & J O'Donoghue (Town Clerk)

**Also attended by:** 2 members of the public, Cllr Garvey (CWAC), Cllr Sumner (CWAC), PCSO Flanagan & PC Blake (Beat Manager, Cheshire Police), A Ranger (CWAC), K Goryl (Brio Leisure)

## Meeting 10

### 1. Apologies and reasons for absence

To receive apologies and note reasons for absence from members.

**RESOLVED:** Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr Drapeur (work commitments), Cllr Nield (personal).

**NOTED:** Cllr Pennington and Cllr Wood were not in attendance.

### 2. Declarations of interest

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

**NOTED:** There were no declarations of interest.

### 3. PCSO

To note the report provided by PCSO N Flanagan.

**NOTED:** The report was noted, including ongoing issues with scrambler bikes, which are currently being addressed, and parking concerns at Manor House School, which will be considered by the Amenities Committee at its next meeting. It was also confirmed that the PSCO will continue to support Frodsham Town Council and neighbouring parishes, with the precise coverage area to be confirmed at the May meeting.

### 4. Frodsham Leisure Centre

To receive an update on the Leisure Centre development from Anna Ranger, Economic Growth Programme Manager (Leisure and Market Towns) Cheshire West and Chester Council and Kerry Goryl Operations Director at Brio Leisure.

**NOTED:** An update was provided which is appended to the minutes (Appendix A).

### 5. Public participation

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.

**NOTED:** One member of the public addressed Agenda Item 19, speaking in support of Frodsham Town Council continuing its current practice of audio recording meetings and publishing the recordings on the Town Council website.

### 6. CWAC

To note the report provided by Cllr Garvey and Sumner.

**NOTED**

### 7. Minutes

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 26th January 2026.

**RESOLVED:** The minutes were approved and signed.

## **8. Finance**

(a) To approve and sign the Finance Report for the period 1<sup>st</sup> February to 28<sup>th</sup> February 2026.

**RESOLVED:** The Finance Report for the period 1<sup>st</sup> February to 28<sup>th</sup> February 2026 was approved and signed.

(b) To note that the sum of all bank accounts as at 28<sup>th</sup> February 2026 was £341,776.

### **NOTED**

(c) To note that the January & February bank reconciliation have been signed against the bank statement and cashbook by Cllr Wood.

### **NOTED**

(d) To nominate a councillor to check and sign the bank reconciliation reports for month ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2026.

**RESOLVED:** It was agreed to appoint Cllr B Wade to check and sign the bank reconciliation reports for month ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2026.

## **9. Committee appointment**

To appoint Cllr Hook to both the Finance and General Purposes Committee and the Events Committee.

**RESOLVED:** It was agreed to appoint Cllr Hook to both the Finance and General Purposes Committee and the Events Committee.

## **10. Internal audit**

(a) To note the Town Clerk's report on the provision of interim and year-end internal audits, and the year-end external audit.

### **NOTED**

(b) To note that the interim internal audit has been completed covering both financial and governance checks as per the Practitioner's Guide 2025 (<https://www.nalc.gov.uk/resource/practitioners-guide-2025.html>) and in accordance with the Annual Governance and Accountability Return and reported to the Finance & General Purposes Committee, actions indicated have been completed and the action log has been updated (copy provided in meeting pack).

### **NOTED**

(c) To note that FTC's Financial Regulations require the Clerk, once two councillors' signatures have been obtained on each invoice, to set up online payments and submit them to two authorised signatories for online approval (para 7.4), however the Co-operative Business Bank only allows one authorised signatory to complete the payment authorisation.

### **NOTED**

(d) To consider an amendment to Finance Regulations to amend para 7.4 to one authorised signatory in line with the Co-operative Business Bank authority.

**RESOLVED:** It was unanimously resolved to amend para 7.4 to one authorised signatory in line with the Co-operative Business Bank authority. Clerk to publish and circulate revised Finance Regulations to all councillors.

**ACTION: JO**

## **11. BT consultation – phone box O/S 101 Main Street**

To note BT's consultation on the removal of telephony equipment from the listed telephone kiosk and to consider relocating the defibrillator currently at the Sainsbury's store to the kiosk, together with the installation of a bleed kit.

**RESOLVED:** It was unanimously agreed to respond to the consultation via CWAC, confirming that Frodsham Town Council would be willing to adopt the phone box (outside 101 Main Street), take on responsibility for its ongoing maintenance, relocate the defibrillator currently at the Sainsbury's store to the kiosk, and install a bleed kit.

**ACTION: JO**

## 12. Frodsham Leisure Centre

- (a) To note a request for funding.

### **NOTED**

- (b) To agree action to be taken.

**RESOLVED:** It was agreed to raise this as an agenda issue for the Town Meeting to be held in May 2026 and to invite A Ranger (CWAC) to attend and provide information to the meeting by way of public engagement.

**ACTION: JO**

## 13. Pubwatch

To receive an update from Cllr Lofts.

**NOTED:** Cllr Lofts presented a report, noting that the Chair has resigned while the Vice Chair remains in post. It was also reported that radios have been provided; however, they are not linked to a central base, meaning operatives can communicate with each other but not with a central point. It was further noted, with some disappointment, that not all pubs in the Frodsham area have agreed to participate in the scheme. Group meetings will continue, although not on a monthly basis.

## 14. Artisan Market

- (a) To note the advice of the National Association of British Market Authorities (NABMA) that the Artisan Market should be granted a licence to regularise its operation having operated on a monthly basis since March 2024.

### **NOTED**

- (b) To approve the market licence prepared by the Town Clerk in consultation with NABMA, and to note NABMA's advice that there is no requirement to restrict the number of stalls operated by the licence holder, other than by specifying an appropriate geographical limit within the licence agreement.

**RESOLVED:** It was agreed to approve the market licence, prepared by the Town Clerk in consultation with NABMA, with the clarification that market fees will be reviewed annually. At Cllr Moorcroft's request, a named vote was taken, with the following councillors voting in favour: Cllr H Hayes (Chair), Cllr A Holman, Cllr Hook, Cllr Hughes, Cllr R Lofts (Vice Chair), Cllr Lowrie and Cllr B Wade. The motion was carried.

**ACTION: JO**

- (c) To note the report provided by the Town Clerk in relation to the TRO for the Artisan Market which took place on 20th December 2025.

### **NOTED**

## 15. Asset Register

To approve the updated Asset Register submitted by the Town Clerk and to note that a physical verification of the condition of the listed assets was carried out by the Town Clerk during February 2026.

**RESOLVED:** The updated Asset Register was unanimously approved.

## 16. Insurance review

To note that the Town Clerk conducted an insurance review on 4 March 2026, which was submitted to Zurich Municipal, and that Zurich Municipal have updated the insurance schedule to reflect the revised valuations.

**NOTED**

**17. Risk Assessment**

To approve the updated Risk Assessment provided by the Town Clerk.

**RESOLVED:** The updated Risk Assessment was unanimously approved.

**18. Frodsham Solar**

To consider inviting Glyn Morris (FFOW), Paul Friston (CWAC), and Andrew Russell (Axis Planning Consultants) to attend a Full Council meeting to discuss the Public Rights of Way Management Plan, Solar Farm queries, and potential modifications to the Landscape and Ecology Master Plan to mitigate impacts.

**RESOLVED:** It was resolved to invite Glyn Morris (FFOW), Paul Friston (CWAC), and Andrew Russell (Axis Planning Consultants) to attend the July Full Council meeting to discuss the Public Rights of Way Management Plan, Solar Farm queries, and potential modifications to the Landscape and Ecology Master Plan to mitigate impacts.

**19. Recording meetings**

(a) To note the report provided by the Town Clerk.

**NOTED**

(b) To consider the recommendations of the Town Clerk.

**RESOLVED:** The Council thanked the Town Clerk for the recommendations; however, it was agreed to continue audio recording meetings and publishing transcripts in accordance with the current policy.

**20. Preferred suppliers**

To note that, at the Finance & General Purposes Committee Meeting held on 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2026, a list of preferred suppliers was unanimously approved in accordance with the committee's terms of reference and Scheme of Delegation to the Clerk (para 3.12).

**NOTED**

**21. Governance relationships with external companies**

(a) To note that the report from the independent auditor, JDH Business Services, following the interim internal audit completed in February 2026, confirms that no governance risks, instances of non-compliance, or issues relating to policies, procedures, or procurement activities were identified (see also item 10b).

**NOTED**

(b) To note that Cllr Moorcroft requested consideration of governance matters relating to the Council's relationship with external companies, including associated risks and compliance with policies and procedures, and that this has been addressed as set out in Minute 21(a) and 10(b).

**NOTED**

**22. Next Meeting**

18<sup>th</sup> May 2026 at Forest Hills Hotel, Frodsham.

**23. Close of meeting**

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**Frodsham Leisure Centre Redevelopment – Summary Report to Council 23/03/2026**

**Report by:** Anna Ranger (Economic Growth Programme Manager, Leisure and Market Towns) Cheshire West and Chester Council

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**1. Introduction**

Cheshire West and Chester Council, in partnership with Brio, is progressing plans to redevelop Frodsham Leisure Centre and Library. The purpose of the report is to outline progress to date and explore potential funding support options for elements of the scheme.

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**2. Project Vision**

The vision for the Frodsham Leisure Centre redevelopment is to develop a sustainable offer for Leisure, Health and Wellbeing services across the A56 Corridor area which focusses on increasing participation and reducing health inequalities.

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**3. Progress to Date**

Significant steps have already been completed, including:

- community & stakeholder consultation/ engagement
- a leisure needs analysis
- assessment of usage and trends
- building surveys and identification of energy efficiency options
- a feasibility study looking at a long list of options and potential funding
- exploration of options including co-location/demand for upper floor usage -however this has shown that refurbishment of upper floor is not viable
- appointed Ellis Williams Architects who have completed RIBA stages 1 and 2 which includes detailed structural, drainage, mechanical and electrical studies and design works
- secured an uplift from £1m to £4.5m and now £6m
- just completed engagement on the emerging plans

Brio Frodsham is performing strongly, over the last 12 months, maintaining growth despite operational challenges and the age of the building. Membership has increased steadily, rising above 1,000 in May and stabilising at around 1,050 since September, with current membership at 1,076. The centre remains well used, supporting 34 regular clubs and bookings and delivering a responsive fitness programme of 39 weekly classes.

The centre continues to play an important role within the local community, hosting major events and supporting a wide range of partner and community initiatives. Attendances has remained robust, averaging over 9,000 visits per month, an increase of 10% year on year. Financial performance is positive, with year-to-date income up 7.5% (as of January 2026) and the centre operates at a small operational surplus, supported by careful cost and staffing management.

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**4. Proposed Facilities**

We will create a modern, vibrant and fit-for-purpose leisure, health and wellbeing facilities at Frodsham Leisure Centre, attached to the existing Sports Hall and Library. The objective is to create a fully accessible and welcoming space to build on the already strong levels of Brio membership, range of classes and sports clubs already using the facility, to further support and improve the health and wellbeing

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of the local community. Frodsham Leisure Centre is an already important site for leisure, health and wellbeing and library services. The new facilities are designed to meet the needs of existing leisure and library customers and the wider community.

The redeveloped leisure centre will deliver:

- accessible design throughout
- 70-station gym - a brand new and much larger space, with modern equipment across multiple zones
- Air-conditioned studio - a new studio space for 35+ users, purpose-built for group fitness classes plus a dedicated spin studio
- Upgraded sports hall with new floor
- New community room
- Shared community area linking leisure and library services
- Modern changing facilities including a Changing Places toilet
- Enhanced accessibility and improved customer experience

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## 5. Funding Context

The current budget of £6m is fully allocated. Several items have been removed from scope due to budget limitations. The Council is exploring alternative funding routes for future phases, but we are asking the Town Council to support the essential components already within the £6m scheme as they need to be delivered. If you would prefer to fund something that is further down the priority list and not currently included in the budget, please let us know and we can get those items costed up and we can continue this discussion.

As you know these are financially challenging times for everyone including Cheshire West and Chester Council, however the Council we will do everything they can to keep the cost under £6m to ensure the completion of the project to the proposals outlined but your funding can help reduce that pressure.

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## 6. Funding Options for Frodsham Town Council

Following discussions at the last Frodsham Leisure centre and Library community group meeting made up of local ward members, your very own Cllr Richard Lofts, local residents and CWaC and Brio colleagues. Your local residents suggested that we should come to Frodsham Town Council to ask for your support on the Frodsham Leisure centre and library redevelopment.

The Town Council is invited to contribute towards specific, high-impact elements. Indicative costs (early-stage estimates) include:

### Option 1 – Sports Hall Floor - £107,000

The sports hall floor is nearing the end of its useful life, a replacement will allow for a sustainable use of the sports hall. The new sports hall floor will be 812m<sup>2</sup> of high-performance, multi-purpose playing surface designed to meet modern sporting, safety, and accessibility standards. It will benefit all the users which includes, school groups and sports groups such as volleyball and badminton. It will provide a durable, resilient, and visually appealing finish suitable for a wide range of indoor sports, physical education activities, community use, and events.

### Option 2 – Community Room - £89,000

One of the squash courts will be transformed into a 66m<sup>2</sup> community room with a flexible open floor space. It will be a multi-purpose indoor space designed to host a range of activities, events, and gatherings such as parties, meetings, small group activities or community sessions.

### Option 3 – Community Area - £83,000

The community area will be a new 33m<sup>2</sup> space that links the leisure centre and the library in a communal

area that feels like a shared community living room. It will be a comfortable and welcoming space where wellbeing, learning, and social connection flow together. The space will feature vending machines along with cosy sofas, chairs and desks to encourage people to relax, socialise and enjoy the library. We also hope it will become a vibrant hub for community groups to host events and meetings.

#### **Option 4 – Changing Places Unit - £28,000**

In addition to brand new changing facilities and toilets, there will also be a 14m<sup>2</sup> Changing Places unit. They are fully accessible toilets designed to provide users with a safe and comfortable experience. They offer more space than a standard accessible WC and include specialist equipment such as a height adjustable changing bench, a peninsular toilet, and a ceiling hoist. People with profound and multiple learning disabilities or with physical disabilities such as spinal injuries, muscular dystrophy and multiple sclerosis often need extra equipment and space to allow them to use the toilets safely and comfortably. The closest one currently is in Halton Lea Library according to [Changing Places Toilets](#) org. Changing Places Toilets (CPTs) are the key to unlocking community access ensuring that everyone can visit a toilet that supports them to have their personal care needs met safely and with dignity and respect. This additional facility will be an excellent addition to the facilities in Frodsham and will benefit users of not only the leisure centre and library but also Castle Park, Frodsham Town Centre and the GP surgery be people who previously may not have felt comfortable to visit Frodsham because of the lack of facilities.

It is hoped that you will see this not only as a funding request, but as a valuable opportunity to play a visible role in supporting a project that will directly benefit this community. Your funding would be recognised through plaques, branding (e.g., Town Council crest in sports hall flooring), and inclusion in press and promotional activity and the project launch, highlighting your commitment and support in making this project happen.

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### **7. Rationale for Town Council Support**

Ideally the Council would fund the full refurbishment and all the unforeseen costs that occur once you start building a project like this. Contingency and risk are included within the £6m but with the changes in economic climate and a large refurbishment and new build projects like these there are sometimes obstacles that you can never fully derisked. We have done all we can at this stage to derisk the project for example extra surveys and we will continue to derisk as much as we can. The items that mentioned above are all currently included within the £6m budget to reduce the pressure of this ask on the Town Council.

All proposed improvements will promote social inclusion, increase activities to aid social inclusion, enhance the social wellbeing of Frodsham residents and directly benefit the local community, who are the primary users of the Leisure Centre and Library. The aim of the redevelopment is to improve accessibility on many levels, enabling residents who currently face barriers to participation to make full use of all the facilities.

Your investment will have direct benefits to your local residents as the new leisure centre will increase footfall, increased visitor numbers to Frodsham high street, increase the local economy, and enhanced civic pride and community identity.

Funding this project sends a message to the whole community that we are working together, and this is a partnership. The Town Council's contribution can help make the project go further and will delivers significantly more value for residents.

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### **8. Conclusion**

The Frodsham Leisure Centre redevelopment represents a major, once-in-a-generation investment in the wellbeing of local residents. With the core project funded but pressures and unknown risks remaining, financial support from Frodsham Town Council could support key enhancements and maximise community benefit.

Further information or alternative funding item suggestions can be provided on request.

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### **Useful links**

Brio Frodsham redevelopment website [brio frodsham refurb](#)  
Proposed floor layout [SK 50401](#)

[A56 Leisure Corridor | Cheshire West and Chester Council](#)

[Have your say on the new £6m plans to transform Frodsham Leisure Centre | Cheshire West and Chester Council](#)



The budget scheme for the scheme this year was £20,000 – the expenditure against the budget was £17,520, giving an underspend of £2,480.

£17,520 was reimbursed to the organisations redeeming the vouchers. A further £396 was spent on printing the vouchers and posters. The Care home vouchers were hand delivered along with 102 on Lakes ward. The remainder were posted at a cost of £483.49.

1238 vouchers were issued and 1168 (94%) were redeemed. This represents a decrease of 5 in vouchers issued compared to last year. The redemption rate has slightly decreased.

### Where were the vouchers redeemed?

17 businesses accepted the vouchers in 2025, along with 7 local good causes.

#### Businesses

4 Seasons 4 Food	£1,410
Bené Gelateria	£135
Candles Plus	£30
Dandelion Gifts	£390
Devonshire Bakery	£1,020
Flowers by Jenny Penny	£120
Frodsham Coffee Shop	£90
Fussy Cow Boutique	£195
HE Coward Butchers	£7965
Home & Beauty & More	£660
Les Harris Jewellers	£165
Queens Head	£360
Ring O Bells	£2,205
Robert Gleave & Sons Ltd	£645
Simply Local - St Hilda's Drive Post Office	£315
The Cottage Teashop	£585
Top Shop	£195
<b>Total</b>	<b>£16,485</b>

#### Good Causes

4th Frodsham Scout Group	£105
Castle Park Arts Centre	£60
Frodsham Community Association	£135
Frodsham Music & Arts Club	£15
Main Street Community Church	£135
St Laurence Church	£360
Will to Work Workshop	£225
<b>Total</b>	<b>£1,035</b>



**Title:** Consideration of Restrictions on the Chair of the Council  
**Purpose:** To inform Council of the governance, procedural, and practical implications of proposed restrictions relating to the Chair of the Council.

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## 1. Background

A proposal has been raised by Cllr Moorcroft to introduce two governance restrictions relating to the Chair of the Council:

1. To limit the number of consecutive years a councillor may serve as Chair of the Council
2. To prevent the Chair of the Council from also serving as Chair or Vice/Deputy Chair of any Council committee

This report examines the governance, procedural, and practical implications of these proposals and considers whether their adoption would support the effective operation of the Council.

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## 2. Existing Governance Framework

Under the Council's current Standing Orders:

- The Chair of the Council is elected annually by the Council.
- Committee Chairs and Vice/Deputy Chairs are appointed by the Council and reviewed on a regular basis.
- There are no restrictions on the number of consecutive terms a Chair may serve.
- There are no restrictions preventing the Chair of the Council from chairing or vice-chairing Council committees.

These arrangements place decision-making authority with the Council and provide flexibility to respond to local circumstances.

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## 3. Procedural Considerations: Standing Orders

Introducing either of the proposed restrictions would require a formal amendment to the Council's Standing Orders, as the restrictions would introduce governance rules that do not currently exist.

- Amendments to Standing Orders must be made by a special motion in accordance with the Standing Orders.
- No such amendment has been tabled for Council's consideration at this time.

It is also noted that Frodsham Town Council's established practice is to review and amend its Standing Orders primarily when they are updated or revised by the National Association of Local Councils (NALC).

The Council last considered and adopted changes to its Standing Orders following the introduction of the updated NALC Model Standing Orders in July 2025, at the meeting held on 28 July 2025, minute reference FTC/28/07/2025/10b.

This context is relevant when considering whether additional, locally specific amendments should be introduced outside of the normal review cycle.

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## 4. Consideration of Restricting the Length of Time a Chair May Serve

### Advantages sometimes cited

- Encourages leadership rotation and broader participation.
- May reduce perceptions of over-concentration of influence.
- Can support long-term succession planning.

### Key considerations against restriction

- The Chair is already subject to annual election, providing a clear democratic safeguard and accountability mechanism.
- Continuity of leadership can be beneficial, particularly during periods of change, complex projects, or sensitive decision-making.
- Experience and procedural knowledge developed over time can significantly enhance meeting efficiency and governance quality.
- Limiting the length of service may reduce flexibility and force reluctant or unsuitable appointments.
- Preventing re-election solely on the basis of time served may undermine democratic choice and discourage long-term commitment.

### **Conclusion on term limits**

While leadership renewal is important, the existing annual election process already provides an effective and proportionate mechanism for accountability. Introducing a fixed limit on the length of time a Chair may serve risks reducing flexibility and stability without delivering clear governance benefits.

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## **5. Consideration of Preventing the Chair from Chairing Other Committees**

### **Advantages sometimes cited**

- May reduce perceived concentration of authority.
- Can encourage wider distribution of leadership roles.
- May address concerns about balance or fairness.

### **Key considerations against restriction**

- The Chair of the Council is often the most experienced and procedurally confident councillor, which can improve the effectiveness of committee meetings.
- Councils may have limited capacity, and prohibiting dual roles could weaken committee leadership.
- Committee appointments are already made by the Council and reviewed regularly, allowing concerns to be addressed without additional rules.
- Allowing the Chair to serve on committees can improve consistency, communication, and alignment between committee work and full Council decisions.
- A blanket prohibition removes discretion even where no governance issue exists and may introduce unnecessary rigidity.

### **Conclusion on committee restrictions**

Preventing the Chair of the Council from chairing or vice-chairing committees may unnecessarily limit the Council's ability to deploy experience and leadership where it is most needed. Existing appointment processes already allow the Council to manage any concerns on a case-by-case basis.

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## **6. Good Governance Considerations**

Good governance is supported by:

- Democratic choice through annual elections and appointments.
- Flexibility to respond to local capacity and circumstances.
- Valuing experience while encouraging development of future leaders through mentoring and shared responsibility.
- Avoiding unnecessary procedural complexity where existing arrangements are operating effectively.

Many councils promote leadership development through encouragement and support rather than through prohibitions or fixed limits.

## 7. Overall Conclusion

The introduction of restrictions on:

- the length of time a Chair may serve, and
- the ability of the Chair to chair or vice-chair other committees

would represent a significant change to existing governance arrangements and would require a formal amendment to the Council's Standing Orders, which has not been tabled.

While such restrictions may appear attractive in principle, in practice they risk:

- reducing flexibility,
- weakening leadership capacity, and
- constraining democratic choice.

The current framework, recently reviewed and adopted following NALC's Model Standing Orders in July 2025, already provides appropriate safeguards through annual elections and appointments.

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## 8. Recommendation

That Council:

1. Notes the contents of this report;
2. Notes that introducing restrictions on:
  - the length of time a Chair of the Council may serve, and/or
  - the ability of the Chair of the Council to serve as Chair or Vice/Deputy Chair of Council committees would require a formal amendment to the Council's Standing Orders, which has not been tabled
3. Notes that the Council last reviewed and amended its Standing Orders following the adoption of the National Association of Local Councils Model Standing Orders in July 2025 (minute reference FTC/28/07/2025/10b) and there is no requirement to consider this further at the present time or before NALC revises the Model Standing Orders.