

# Anger at rule changes that wasted efforts into winning homes bonus

**F**rome Town Council has expressed its frustration over its failure to win Government cash towards local projects.

In the latest round of a £200,000 funding pot, seven groups from Frome were given £119,000 including Frome Town Football Club and a new playground at Coleford.

The money comes from the New Homes Bonus originating from the Government and distributed by Mendip District Council.

The New Homes Bonus is a

**By Caroline Wood**  
c.wood@westnews.co.uk

Government scheme aimed at encouraging local authorities to grant planning permission for the building of new homes in return for extra money.

The cash received is based on the amount of extra council tax revenue raised and includes new homes, conversions and empty homes brought back into use. As Frome is the largest town in Mendip and has the greatest share of new homes

being built, the town council believes this should be reflected in the amount it receives.

Failed applications by the town council included a re-use centre in Frome working with Men's Sheds and Edventure; the creation of an electric car club in the town and money towards the purchase of a new community hub in the former social services building in Christchurch Street West.

The town council is angered over the apparent change in criteria by Mendip after the closing date.

Mayor Peter Macfadyen said: "While I accept that government rules were changed so that New Homes Bonus money could be diverted by Mendip for central costs, their cabinet agreed a percentage should still be passed to the communities most affected by building.

"This percentage has nowhere near been reached. Even more frustratingly, the rules for applying were changed long after the closing date, so as a council we wasted many hours of work."

Mr Macfadyen told coun-

cillors at a full meeting of the town council how annoyed he was when the council's applications on behalf of Frome projects were rejected.

He added: "We have given up attempting to achieve any sense of fairness with regard to this money being spent where it should be, but to be told that when we apply using Mendip rules these have changed after we applied thus ruling Frome projects out is diabolical."

The town clerk will be writing to Mendip asking when the criteria changed.