

CHATTERIS TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes Dated 14th May 2019

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1 of 11

Minutes of the annual meeting of Chatteris Town Council held on Tuesday 14th May 2019 at the Council Chambers, 14 Church Lane, Chatteris.

Present: Councillors L Ashley, I Benney, A Charrier, A Gowler, W Haggata, A Hay, P Murphy, F Newell, M Petrou, J Smith and I Taylor.

Outgoing Mayor Cllr Haggata welcomed the new members of the Council and said Chatteris was looking good and it was an exciting time for the town with many projects being undertaken. The Town Council had pushed for the projects with enthusiasm and determination and he firmly believed the best was yet to come. He thanked members for their support over the past three years and said he had thoroughly enjoyed the opportunity to serve as Mayor.

1) Election of Mayor

Cllr Murphy proposed Cllr Ashley as Mayor, seconded by Cllr Benney and agreed by all. Cllr Ashley was duly elected as Mayor.

She began by thanking Cllr Haggata and said she had some big shoes to fill but it would be an honour to serve as Mayor for the coming year. Cllr Ashley said she hoped the council would continue to work together as a team and she promised to do her best for the town and community of Chatteris.

2) Mayor's Declaration of Acceptance of Office

The Mayor signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

3) Members' Declarations of Acceptance of Office

All members present signed their Declarations of Acceptance of Office.

4) Election of Deputy Mayor

Cllr Murphy proposed Cllr Benney as Deputy Mayor, seconded by Cllr Taylor and agreed by all. Cllr Benney was duly elected as Deputy Mayor.

5) Registering of Members' Interests and Declarations of Interest and Dispensations to Speak and Vote on Declarable Pecuniary Interest Items

Councillors were asked to complete the Register of Member Interests and return their forms to the Clerk.

6) To Accept Apologies for Absence

An apology for absence had been received from Cllr J Carney.

7) Appointments to Outside Bodies

Members had before them a list of groups and the Councillors who represented the Council on those groups. The Clerk asked members to confirm they were happy to represent the Council and made amendments as advised. The revised list was agreed as follows:

King Edward Centre – Cllrs Ashley and Newell
Safer Fenland CCTV Partner Liaison – Cllrs Benney, Carney and Smith
Red Tile Wind Farm Trust – Cllr Hay
Chatteris In Bloom and Street Pride – Cllrs Murphy and Petrou
Isle of Ely Blind Society – Cllr Murphy
Museum Trust – Cllrs Ashley, Benney, Haggata and Newell
Midsummer Festival – Cllrs Ashley and Newell
Transport Committee – Cllrs Charrier, Haggata and Newell
Feoffee Charity – Cllrs Murphy and Newell
Metalcraft Charity Fund – Cllr Hay (Cllr Smith as substitute)

The Clerk said Neighbourhood Watch appeared to have disbanded.

A letter had been received from Street Pride asking for occasional councillor attendance as part of Meet your Councillor promotions. Cllr Hay suggested it would be helpful if councillors went along (if able) when there was a litter pick on their ward. Members agreed this was the best way forward.

8) Election of Working Groups

Members said they were willing to serve on the working groups as follows:

Leisure and General Purposes: Cllrs Ashley, Benney, Carney, Charrier, Haggata, Hay, Newell, Petrou and Smith.

Planning: Cllrs Ashley, Benney, Carney, Gowler, Haggata, Newell, Petrou and Smith.

9) To Approve Mayor's Allowance

Members considered approving the Mayor's Allowance for 2019/20 as shown in the budget. It was **resolved** that an allowance of up to £1,550 be paid to the Mayor in respect of expenses incurred in the performance of official duties under the scheme approved by the Council on 11th January 2011 and in accordance with HM Revenue and Customs Regulations.

10) Open Forum

There were no members of the public present and it was, therefore, agreed to move on to item 11) on the agenda.

11) Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 2nd April 2019 were agreed and signed by the Mayor as a correct record.

12) Matters Arising from the Minutes

Min 262) FACT Shuttle Bus: The Clerk confirmed both the Ely and St Ives bus services were now operating but take up was slow. Members suggested putting a small advert in the local newspaper. The Clerk confirmed she had submitted information about the service to Centrepont, the bus times were on the council's website, pupils at Cromwell had been informed and Cllr Carney had advertised the bus timetable on social media.

Min 264) Furrowfields: Cllr Taylor asked for complaints about the grass cutting at Furrowfields to be passed to FDC.

Min 268) Barrier: The Clerk said since the Council's decision not to make a donation to the fund for the provision of a road safety barrier along the Sixteen Foot Bank Road she had received a letter stating that three parish councils, the Fenland Road Safety Campaign and the Middle Level Commissioners had all agreed to contribute to the fund.

13) Police Matters

Local Police

Members had already received a copy of a confidential report from the policing team and Sgt Lugg on the Fenland Neighbourhood Policing team's work over the past month and Sgt Lugg's updates on the shed break-ins.

Neighbourhood Alerts

2, 15 & 24/4/19: Round-up of convictions for Fenland and latest news.

3/4/19: Notification of Police and Crime Commissioner's surgery dates.

17/4/19: Warning about rogue traders and the dangers of buying any services from the doorstep.

17/4/19: Notification that the neighbourhood policing team have put a stop to the shed break-ins problem.

17/4/19: Notification that the force website has been shortlisted for a national award for its overall user friendliness and adaptive design.

30/4/19: Latest Neighbourhood Watch Network e-newsletter.

Councillors were concerned that Sgt Lugg had come in for criticism on social media about the fact that those who were responsible for the shed break-ins had received a caution. Cllr Benney pointed out the local police had worked really hard on the issue and did not deserve the criticism, particularly as the shed burglaries had stopped. Members agreed the police should be commended for their efforts.

Cllr Taylor said he had also been impressed by the police response when his house was vandalised. They had quickly gathered evidence and had given him regular updates on progress.

14) FDC, Street Scene, Section 106 and CCTV Updates

Members had a copy of the latest updates (**copy attached**).

The Clerk explained to new members that the funds in the Section 106 account were paid by developers and held by FDC to be spent on recreation grounds and public spaces in Chatteris. Unfortunately there had been no additions to the pot in recent months. Cllr Benney said this was due to developers managing to wheedle their way out of making contributions by claiming it made developments unviable but this was being looked into by FDC.

15) County Council Street Lighting Attachments Policy

The Clerk reported she had written complaining about the new attachments policy which required the submission of lengthy paperwork to obtain a licence to attach items, such as the hanging baskets, Christmas lights and bunting, to street lighting columns. She complained the policy was introduced so quickly it did not give enough time for volunteers to comply and was unfair on volunteer groups. The Clerk had also pointed out the street lights columns in Chatteris had been specially designed to take the Christmas lights and hanging baskets.

Mr Alan Hitch, Strategic Projects Manager at the County Council, had responded acknowledging that the policy was an additional burden but pointing out that it was essential to ensure that any attachment placed on the adopted public highway was safe and that the persons installing/erecting the attachments carried out the work safely. He did acknowledge that the lighting columns in Chatteris were specifically designed.

In the meantime one of the In Bloom team had completed the paperwork to cover In Bloom, the bunting and the Christmas Lights and Mr Hitch had acknowledged that they were minded to grant a licence for In Bloom (and the bunting) but would expect a competent electrical contractor to carry out electrical works for the Christmas lights.

The Clerk was anxious to ensure that no additional financial burden fell on the volunteer groups as a result of the new policy and members agreed to her suggestion that the Town Council should consider covering any additional costs.

16) Consideration & Approval of the Annual Governance Statement (Part 1) of the Annual Governance & Accountability Return (AGAR) 2019

Members had before them Appendix A (see attached) which set out the assurances that Members were required to attest to in Part 1 of the AGAR, together with qualification of each section, to enable the Council to provide the required assurance over the signatures of the Mayor and the Clerk.

This was to be considered and approved in advance of Section 2 of the AGAR- Accounting Statements.

It was **RESOLVED** that: -

[i] The Annual Governance Statement, as detailed in **Appendix A**, was considered and approved by the Members as a whole and section 1 of the AGAR 2018/19 was signed by the Mayor and the Clerk prior to the approval of the accounting statements.

17) Accounting Statement (Part 2) of the AGAR 2018/19 & Annual Return

The Financial Officer presented a report, the purpose of which was to recommend approval of the Accounting Statement- Part 2 of the AGAR 2018/19 (Appendix B of the Annual Return) and the contents of the Annual Return for 2018/19 due to be submitted to the External Auditors (Littlejohn) by the 1st July 2019. **(A full copy of the report is appended to these Minutes).**

The Financial Officer was required to certify and sign the document in advance of the Council meeting. The Mayor was required to sign the document after approval by Council at the said meeting. There was a requirement to approve the Accounting Statement after the approval of the Annual Governance Statement.

As neither the total income nor the total expenditure for 2018/19 exceeded £200,000 the Council's accounts for 2018/19 should attract a 'Basic' audit, the Financial Officer told members. A detailed Statement of Accounts was shown at Appendix C (Balance Sheet) to the report and the Financial Officer summarised the position. The **Reserves & Holding Accounts** had increased to £208,070.83 as specified in the end of year accounts and balance sheet. The **General Fund** balance increased by £8,530.73. The reasons for this were shown at **Appendix D** expressed as a comparison with the Budget 2018/19. Also contained in the full report was the year end bank reconciliation (Appendix E).

Members noted that the Internal Auditors Report would be presented at the June Council meeting.

It was **RESOLVED** that: -

[i] The Accounting Statements (Part 2 of the AGAR) (**Appendix B**), to be certified by the Financial Officer and endorsed by the Mayor, be approved.

[ii] The detailed accounts and analyses of the Annual Return for 2018/19, as submitted, be approved.

The Financial Officer was thanked for all her hard work on the accounts.

18) Payment of Accounts

It was **RESOLVED** that the payment of the following accounts be noted and approved: -

Financial Officer	Payroll May 2019	1,058.92
Town Clerk	Payroll May 2019	1,538.01
HMRC	Payroll May 2019	629.90
Cambs Pension	Payroll May 2019	1,365.37
Zen Internet	Monthly Website fee May/Jun	10.79
Carol Chubbock	Annual Allotment rent	275.00
One Com	Monthly Phone Bill	79.09
D Stimson	Window Cleaning Council building, one year	180.00
Anglia Stairlift	Service contract re 2 visits stairlift council building	300.00
Mark Burton	Reim. materials re Little Acre Pocket Park	35.47
R J Warren	Road repair Allotments	748.80
Rural Cambs CAB	Grants to voluntary organisations	300.00
RAF Memorial Chatteris Group	Grant towards Memorial Monument	500.00
R Leney	Reim. of equipment re Summer Festival	631.63
Cambs CC	Summer Reading Challenge Chatteris	350.00
Ethos Walters	Additional photocopying above the contract	41.21
S Payne	Gardening Services	1000.00
M Edgley Plumbing & Heating	Service boiler and install & supply new taps	593.32
R J Warren	Supply labour & materials to build mound Little Acre Pocket Park	2512.80
R J Warren	Supply and Install two Oak tree trunks/benches	612.00
G M James Electrical	Electrical Installation condition report & necessary works	375.55
Wave	Office building water bill	70.17

		1926
Wave	LH Side Allotments water bill	7 of 11 13.18
Wave	RH Side Allotments water bill	189.45
Chatteris Museum Trust	Grants to Vol Organisations	4,300.00
Chatteris Christmas Lights	Grants to Vol Organisations	9,000.00
Chatteris In Bloom	Grants to Vol Organisations	2,500.00
Total		29,210.66

The Financial Officer brought the annual Museum grant payment to the attention of the Members. She advised that the Museum was looking really good and she was aware how hard the volunteers had worked to get it looking as it did.

The volunteers were made up of a core group of between 8 and 10 people who completed 3741 volunteer man hours between Jan-Dec 2018. She also advised Members that 916 Adults and 232 children visited the Museum in 2018.

The Financial Officer reminded Members that a budget of £2,000 had been set aside for the maintenance of the Little Acre Pocket Park. She advised them that she had received a quotation from the contractor who had completed most of the works at the Pocket Park and had done so at a very satisfactory standard giving the Council a best value service. The quotation of £864.00 was for two cuts per month over 4 months to include spraying strimming and litter picking the area. Any additional cuts required would be charged at £108.00 per cut.

The Financial Officer advised Members that as the quotation was under £1,000 it wasn't necessary to obtain other quotations as per the Financial Regulations.

The Pocket Park was in desperate need of its first cut now and maintenance work needed to start as soon as possible. On this basis The Financial Officer proposed that Members approved the quotation of £864.00

The Financial Officer had also received a quotation from the same contractor to create a Dry Pond Area as discussed with the Town Clerk & Cllrs Smith & Haggata.

Option 1 was for a Dry Pond with a radius of 4.5 M round at a cost of £2,520

Option 2 was for a Dry Pond with a radius of 3M round with a connection creek 5 M long & 1.4 M wide at a cost of £1,716.

Members agreed that Option 1 would make more of an impact in the area and it was suggested that the Friends of the Pocket Park voluntary group could maybe add a creek to the Dry Pond once the Dry Pond was completed.

As the cost was over £1,000 Standing Orders were suspended for the Council to approve the quotation from the contractor and it was agreed no further quotations should be sought.

It was **RESOLVED** that: -

The quotation of £864.00 for the provision of the maintenance service at Little Acre Pocket Park be noted and approved.

It was also **RESOLVED** that: -

Standing Orders be suspended and the quotation of £2,520 Option 1 for the Dry Pond be noted and approved.

19) Planning

Cllr Ashley (Chairman) presented the minutes of the Planning Working Group meeting held on Tuesday 30th April 2019 (**copy attached**).

Working group Members made recommendations on applications a) to c) (as shown on the appended list) and these were ratified, members then considered applications d) to h) and it was agreed to return the applications to Fenland District Council marked as follows:

- a) Support
- b) Support
- c) Recommend Refusal due to the adverse impact on neighbouring property (4 Whaleys Yard).
- d) Noted
- e) Support
- f) Noted
- g) Support
- h) Support, it is the right development for the site; welcome the development of bungalows and the density. Please can the bungalows have features which relate to the site, in particular sympathetic brickwork. Councillors are keen to ensure that plans for works to the coach house are submitted promptly.

The Clerk informed members that the application to extend the planning permission for a mobile classroom at Kingsfield School had been granted.

20) Leisure & General Purposes Working Group Report & Recommendations

Cllr Smith (Chairman) presented the minutes of the Leisure and General Purposes Working Group meeting held on Tuesday 16th April 2019 (**copy attached**).

Min L79) Benches: It was believed the bench at Wenny Recreation Ground had still to be refitted. The Clerk had reported the play equipment dangers to Mr Phil Hughes at FDC.

Min L80) Pocket Park: Cllr Smith said there was a little water in the pond following the recent rainfall and the pond needed to be cleared of weeds which had been thrown back into it. The new benches were being used as a BMX course. The Clerk agreed to ask County

Highways for a directional sign to the pocket park. She had also looked into signs for the pond and the Friends had suggested a deep water warning sign would be better than one which claimed there was a danger. The Clerk had made enquiries about the cost of a buoy which were fairly expensive. She queried how long the buoy would stay in position and suggested reviewing the situation once the depth of the pond had been established. Cllr Murphy said any type of bins could be installed in the park. It was agreed volunteers or the gardener would empty the bins and transport the rubbish bags to a bin emptied by FDC. Cllr Smith had attended the latest meeting of the Friends of Little Acre Pocket Park (FLAPP). The group had agreed to become a stand-alone group and would be adopting a constitution at their next meeting. The Friends were still very keen to help develop and maintain the park. Min L81) Annual Town Meeting: Cllr Murphy was very concerned at the way the consultant from Growing Fenland had been criticised by the audience at the meeting and he suggested future meetings should not include such presentations.

Min L84) Town Guide: The Mayor said former councillor Kirsty Patterson was having problems with software as she tried to complete the artwork for the new town guide. Cllr Smith suggested it might be time to revert to plan B and insert new information into a guide using the old format. It was agreed the Clerk should write to Ms Patterson acknowledging she was under pressure, asking her for an update and giving her a deadline of the 31st May to complete the work.

Min L85) Date of Next Meeting: Tuesday 18th June 2019.

Cllr Murphy said he had been approached by FDC street cleaners who were concerned by what they had to clear up around the table in the Church meadow area. As the table had recently been damaged again Cllr Murphy queried if it should be moved. It was agreed to discuss the matter at the next leisure meeting.

21) Chatteris Midsummer Festival Update

Members had received a copy of a press release outlining plans for the 2019 Festival. One of the main attractions promised to be the two wrestling shows by Extreme American Wrestling on Saturday 29th June.

The theme of the festival was **#Throwback – 100 Years of Music and Fashion** and many of the towns' organisations and clubs had already chosen their favourite era to depict in the walking parade.

Festival Saturday would be action packed once the parade arrived at the showground. In addition to the wrestling show there would be sporting contests for the young and young at heart, a performance by East Angles Brass Band, the chance to join in a fitness class and an acoustics session by local singers.

In the evening the Party in the Park would include a disco, live music from local bands and singers, the return of the popular foam canon and a spectacular lights show.

The Festival would begin at Furrowfields Recreation Ground on Thursday 27th June with a pamper evening and on the Friday there would be a variety show in the marquee with MC Terry Gauci, music from diva Vivienne de Vil, games, comedy and a chilli supper. To round off the Festival there would be Animal Sunday (30th June) with the return of the horse show, the fun dog show and a visit from Homegrownandraised, a mobile farm experience. There would also be the opportunity to enjoy a cream tea and the festivities would come to a close with a Tug of War competition.

Over the weekend there would also be stalls to browse, funfair rides, inflatables fun and refreshments to enjoy.

The Clerk asked for councillors' help with stewarding duties over the weekend. Cllr Petrou kindly offered to supply food for the volunteers.

22) Traffic Issues

Huntingdon Road: The Clerk had passed the residents' concerns about the junction of Clare Street and Huntingdon Road to Mr Andi Caddy, the Highways officer working on the new TROs for Huntingdon Road. Mr Caddy said the only way forward appeared to be an LHI bid but he warned it was not an accident cluster site so there did not appear to be much of an issue. Mr Caddy also gave an update on the TRO project.

The Clerk had also received an email from a resident concerned for the safety of her parents due to the quantity of traffic using the road and the number of those vehicles speeding along the road. The resident requested signs warning motorists about the 30mph speed limit. The Clerk pointed out Huntingdon Road was one of the areas the MVAS could be positioned but she had still been unable to find a contractor willing to put up the sign. The latest complication was contractors feared the sign was too heavy for lampposts. A discussion took place on who could put up the sign, with Cllr Benney offering to put it up but Cllr Haggata warning it would have to be a qualified contractor for insurance purposes and the Financial Officer confirming this was the case. It was agreed the Clerk should go back to the County officer who supplied the device and state it was not fit for purpose because no-one was willing to put it up and there were no suitable posts to attach it to.

Junction: The Clerk had also been approached by a resident concerned about the safety of the Wood Street/South Park Street junction due to a parked car. The Clerk had explained that the Council had tried to improve safety in the area by applying for an LHI but had been turned down.

Road works: The latest bulletins listing road works & events affecting the highway had been received as had the IHMC Incident Report for March 2019.

23) Correspondence

Members had before them a list of correspondence received since the last meeting (**copy attached**).

WWII commemorations: It was agreed to discuss whether to join the national festivities to commemorate the 75th anniversary of the end of World War II at the leisure meeting.

24) Reports

Cllr Smith reported she had attended a meeting regarding the planned RAF memorial. She said plans were progressing well and the funding was gradually mounting up. The stone was on order and she and Mrs Lorna Jones were researching all the plane crashes in the area during World War II. Cllr Murphy said FDC would install the stone and the surroundings near the war memorial. Cllr Smith said in addition to the stone there would be an information plaque which was being created by Stainless Metalcraft.

25) Items for the Next Agenda

The Clerk asked to be notified of any items for the next agenda.