

# CHATTERIS TOWN COUNCIL

## Minutes Dated 6<sup>th</sup> August 2024

2580

1 of 11

Minutes of a meeting of Chatteris Town Council held on Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> August 2024 at the King Edward Centre, King Edwards Road, Chatteris.

**Present:** Cllrs A Hay (Mayor) I Benney (Deputy Mayor), A Charrier, A Gowler, V Joyce, K Perrin, S Selman and M Siggee

### **63) To Accept Apologies for Absence**

Cllrs L Ashley, J Carney, P Murphy and S Unwin had sent apologies for absence.

### **64) Declarations of Interest & Dispensations to Speak and Vote on Declarable Pecuniary Interest Items**

Cllr Benney declared an interest in all planning applications and Cllrs Siggee and Hay declared an interest as Trustees of the King Edward Centre.

### **65) Open Forum**

There were two members of the public and Cllr Charlie Marks present.

Architect Mr Lee Bevens said he wished to address the Council on behalf of Howard Renovations who had applied for planning permission to develop a site at 2 Doddington Road. Mr Bevens said there was outline consent for 9 executive houses on the site but it was felt these were inappropriate and the current application was for 14 smaller houses (three- and two-bedroom homes) with good sized gardens, which would be for the rental market. Mr Bevens said there was an identified need for smaller units. He said the development would be lower density than the neighbouring development by Persimmon Homes. Access (as in the previous application) would be achieved by demolishing 2 Doddington Road.

Mr Bevens gave councillors a copy of the proposed layout and drone photos of the site. He said the site met the biodiversity net gain criteria.

Cllr Gowler asked about the trees on the site and the applicant said about 25 trees had been taken down because they were not safe, but screening could go back. Mr Bevens said the scheme had soft and hard landscaping which would include new trees. The Mayor pointed out the extant planning permission called for trees to remain and be protected. She said those trees should at least be replaced, especially on the western and southern boundaries. Mr Bevens said if permission was granted they would expect to do another contamination report and the developer expected to pay Section 106 contributions for health and education and agreed it would be good if the money could stay in Chatteris.

## 66) Minutes of the Last Meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2024 were agreed and signed by the Mayor as a correct record.

## 67) Matters Arising from the Minutes

Min 58) Reservoir Consultation: The Clerk had submitted the Council's comments on the Reservoir Consultation (as agreed at the Leisure Working Group meeting). Councillors had also submitted their own comments and Cllr Selman had requested a mud track for (BMX) bikes near the Chatteris entry point, a maze and an adult and children's exercise/play park at the Chatteris end of the site. She pointed out the idea was to give children great playtime experiences.

## 68) Police Matters

Members had received a report based on information received from the police in the past month:

### “Local Police

Notification that one of the priorities for the March neighbourhood team (which covers Chatteris) will be to increase patrols of green spaces across the sector in response to concerns about anti-social behaviour during the summer holidays.

### Neighbourhood Alerts

5/7/24: Notification that a portal was due to be relaunched on the 9<sup>th</sup> July to make it easier for partner agencies of Cambridgeshire Police to report non-emergencies.

5/7/24: Information about Pegasus, a new free scheme for people who may have difficulty communicating their details to the police.

8/7/24: Weekend round-up from local response officers.

9 & 31/7/24: Latest news from the courts.

15/7/24: Request from the Police and Crime Commissioner, Darryl Preston, for residents to complete a short online survey to tell him their views on crime and disorder as he produces a new plan for the county. The survey runs until 16<sup>th</sup> August.

24/7/24: Appeal to parents and guardians to educate their children on hoax calling as the summer holidays begin.

29/7/24: Information about a busy weekend for Fenland response officers.

5/8/24: August edition of the Neighbourhood Watch newsletter Our News.”

## 69) FDC, Street Scene and CCTV Updates

Members had received a copy of the latest FDC, Street Scene and CCTV updates (**copy attached**). A CCTV liaison group meeting was taking place that evening.

**70) Financial Officer's Report**

Members had before them a budgetary control statement for the Revenue (Precept) Account as at 30<sup>th</sup> July 2024 showing expenditure of £279,625.01 and income of £298,188.04 (including a half year's precept income) compared with budgets, along with a bank reconciliation statement and a summary statement of reserves and funds balances.

It was **RESOLVED** that the report be noted and approved.

**71) Payment of Accounts**

The Financial Officer reported that the payment to SSE Energy Solutions for £2,414.04, listed on July's schedule of payments, had been cancelled as it was still under dispute, evidence has been sent to SSE to prove the figure was not owed and the Financial Officer was awaiting confirmation from SSE. A payment was made to G Singh on July's schedule for deposit re drummer in Summer Festival Parade. He did not show and had since repaid the deposit.

£

Payroll	August Payroll	5,946.71
British Gas	Elec Bill Council Offices 14 Church Lane	14.49
Rose Fire & Security	Part payment works at 14 Church Lane, Growing Fenland	9,622.80
Warren Access	Training Xmas Lights	240.00
David J Richards	Summer Festival Printing programmes	1,254.00
F-Stop Camera Club	Festival photos	200.00
Capalc	Cllr Training	50.00
Pro Plumbing	Boiler service & Carbon Monoxide alarm at 1st Floor Park Street	144.00
R Tibbitts	Reim: Bunting supplies	183.90
Booster Cushion	Summer Fun	384.00
Mayor of Huntingdon Town Council	Charity Cheese N Wine event	30.00

S M Reynolds	Reim: Materials for signs at allotments	<b>2583</b> <b>4 of 11</b> 31.54
Lovell & Ward	50% deposit flooring re Flat 1, Growing Fenland	1,733.50
Lovell & Ward	50% deposit flooring re Flat 2, Growing Fenland	1,530.00
Onecom	Phone bill	100.37
British Gas	Electricity Bill: Council Offices, 14 Church Lane	21.92
Wave	Water Bill Office	100.35
Barclays	Bank Charges	132.88
British Gas	Park Street Final Bill 1st Floor	67.23
F/O	Reim Petty Cash	95.71
CF Corporate	Photocopier lease	265.10
CTS Security	Maintenance Service Annual renewal, Park Street Systems	1,482.00
R J Warren	Gardening Services	756.84
R J Warren	Little Acre Gardening Services	269.66
Warboys S&P IDB	Drainage Rates Allotments	179.84
Middle Level Comm	Drainage Rates Allotments	185.46
Pro Plumbing	Unblock Kitchen Sink at 1st Floor, Park Street	90.00
Morton & Hall Consults	Prof: Fees 14 Church Lane, Growing Fenland Project	2,320.80
The Christmas Decorators	Service, repair, replace & make safe Xmas Lights fixtures	1,207.20
Rural Cambs CAB	Face to Face service	1,587.25
S Brooks	Sammy Magic Summer Fun	185.00

		<b>2584</b> <b>5 of 11</b>
Jezo's Events	Summer Fun	270.00
Zen Internet	Website July/August	13.79
Barclaycard	Barclaycard machine	34.80
<b>Total</b>		<b>30,731.14</b>

It was **RESOLVED** that the payment of the above accounts be noted and approved

The Council had received an email from the Christmas Lights Committee Chairman thanking the Council for agreeing to fund a survey of the lights fixtures and to pay the Christmas Decorators company to put up the lights which attach to lampposts. The Clerk said all the fixtures had been checked and any faults repaired, and a report would go off to the County Council.

**72) To Agree Quotations for Flooring at 14 Church Lane Ground Floor**

Members had received the following report from the Clerk:

“Background

The works to convert the ground floor of 14 Church Lane are now nearing completion and the Clerk sought three quotations from local contractors to make good the floors and lay carpet and vinyl in all areas except the council chamber and entrance area (as the brick flooring has been retained in those areas).

Two contractors agreed to visit and give a quotation and they were given the same brief. The flooring will be similar to or the same as that laid in the museum.

The Quotations are as follows:

Company A - Total Cost £7,160 plus VAT (includes allowance of £512 for a Damp Proof Membrane in three rooms where vinyl is to be laid as the floors are so damp. If the floors have dried out this may not be necessary).

Company B – Total Cost £7,365 plus VAT (no allowance for DPM)

Recommendation:

The Clerk believes both companies are capable of delivering the job to a high standard and recommends accepting the lower quote, from Company A, but the decision rests with councillors.”

Members **unanimously agreed** to accept the quotation from Company A. The Clerk then revealed that this was the company who had supplied the flooring at the museum.

**73) To Agree Terms for Leasing of Flats at 14 Church Lane**

The Clerk and the Financial Officer had met with a local estate agent to discuss letting the flats which had been created at 14 Church Lane.

The agent had recommended seeking a rental figure of approximately £1,000 per calendar month for each flat. The agent said his company would advertise the flats for rent, carry out viewings, carry out reference checks on those applying to rent them and then manage the flats, including collecting the rent.

The fee for a managed service would be 7.2% (including VAT) of the rental fee per calendar month and a £360 one off initial set up charge.

Cllr Selman asked if comparison quotes had been sought. The Financial Officer explained this was not necessary under the Financial Regulations. (However, after the meeting the Clerk went on-line to view the fees charged by other estate agents and found the managed service fee was considerably cheaper than competitors and the initial set up charge was just £10 more expensive).

Members **agreed** to accept the quotation and the letting terms set out by the local estate agent, T Payne & Co.

**74) To Consider Requesting Meeting with George Clare Surgery Representatives**

The Mayor said she had asked for the item to go on the agenda as her husband had experienced difficulties in getting an appointment and difficulties were reported on social media.

A few years ago the Council had met with representatives of the George Clare Surgery to discuss capacity and had been assured that the surgery could cope with increased numbers of patients. The Mayor was keen to put concerns to the surgery in a sensitive manner and suggested Councillors forward any questions they had to the Clerk so they could be collated and sent to the surgery in advance of a meeting.

Cllr Benney, the Council's representative on the patients' participation group, said he had spoken with the surgery and they had informed him that following a recruitment drive they had extra nurse practitioners and would find extra doctors if needed. Both he and Cllr Gowler reported good experiences with the doctors. Cllr Siggee suggested more home visits to housebound patients would be helpful and Cllr Selman said there were community district nurses but their numbers had been reduced. Cllr Gowler said pharmacies were now able to provide extra services, such as prescribing anti-biotics.

The Clerk reminded members that the community rooms at 14 Church Lane would soon be ready and the surgery could be offered the use of the rooms.

It was agreed to invite representatives of the surgery to a Leisure Working Group meeting, to open the meeting to all councillors and to request questions in advance.

## 75) Planning

Cllr Siggee (Vice Chairman) presented the minutes of the Planning Working Group meeting held on Tuesday 30<sup>th</sup> July 2024 (**copy attached**).

Members ratified the group's recommendations on applications a) to f) (as shown on the **appended list**) and it was agreed to submit the following comments on the planning applications to Fenland District Council:

- a) Support
- b) Support. Conditions of a previously approved application stipulated some trees should be protected and those trees have been removed; request those trees are replaced. Another survey to test soil for contamination should be required. If application is granted request Section 106 contribution of £2,000 per dwelling for facilities in Chatteris. (Cllr Perrin did not support the application).
- c) Noted
- d) Recommend Refusal, access problems have not been sorted. Access is still inadequate. The drove is a public right of way which is just 3.2m at its widest point and the passing places suggested are believed to be in private ownership. The by-way is well used by walkers, cyclists and horses, more traffic will create an additional hazard for those users. This is piecemeal development and represents over development in the countryside. There are also potential flooding issues. (Cllr Joyce declared an interest and did not vote).
- e) No objections in principle to works but will be guided by tree officer.
- f) Not in agreement with access on to the A142. The A142 has a poor safety record and there are already major issues at the existing two accesses on to the road from New Road and Wenny Road, due to the speed of traffic. The A142 is acknowledged as a red, high casualty route and another access on to it would set a dangerous precedent. The roads, paths and cycleways should be linked to the approved planning application for the land off Wenny Road so access is from Wenny Road. There are also concerns that one of the footpath links from the site appears to be into a car park at The Elms. The spinney along the recreation ground is marked on the map, this must be preserved as it contains a public footpath. If the development does go ahead land levels need to be checked before the work begins to ensure existing properties in The Elms do not suffer more flooding issues. If the development is approved request Section 106 contribution of £2,000 per dwelling for facilities in Chatteris. (Cllr Gowler suggested the Council should send a representative to speak on the plan when it was considered by FDC's planning committee).

Disabled Parking Bay: The Mayor said she had asked for more details of the proposal for another disabled parking bay in West Street. She pointed out she had asked for the

original bay to be removed as it was no longer required and the lines had not be re-painted and the notice had been removed. However, the new application showed the existing disabled parking bay still in place and a new one next to it. She agreed more information was required before an informed decision could be made.

#### **76) Shuttle Bus Trial**

Cllr Carney had confirmed that the trial bus service between Chatteris and Manea railway station would begin on the 10<sup>th</sup> August. FACT would be putting on a 16 seater bus and Cllr Carney had said anyone wishing to travel should book in advance. Concerns were expressed because just one trip to the station in the morning and a return at night had been organised but Cllr Gowler pointed out it was a just a trial and the results would be monitored. Thanks were expressed to Cllr Carney for all the work he had put into the project.

#### **77) Growing Fenland Project Update**

The Clerk reported that the works to 14 Church Lane were continuing apace and were now nearing completion. It was anticipated that the Council would be able to move back in during September and the flats would be available to rent. The carpenters and plumbers had almost completed their works and the decorators had been very busy, even working on Saturdays. The only hold up was the electrical supply as there had been a problem with a board for the new meters, the works had been ordered but there was a waiting time and this was holding up the electrician and was likely to impact on the installation of the security systems. The flooring and window coverings in the flats were due to be installed the following Monday and Tuesday.

#### **78) Leisure and General Purposes Working Group Report & Recommendations**

Cllr Joyce presented the minutes of the Leisure and General Purposes Working Group meeting held on Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> July 2024 (**copy attached**).

Pocket Park: Cllr Joyce said parts of the Pocket Park needed to be re-seeded and he had received another request for a bench. The Clerk said she was waiting to hear back from Community Payback about a bench. She said a working party from FLAPP had been joined by a young man on Saturday and he had been very helpful. He was also helping In Bloom.

Town Guide: Cllr Selman said she had told someone about the FACT bus and they were unaware of its existence. She said this demonstrated the need for the new town guide to go through every door.

#### **79) To Agree To Request Release of Sec 106 Funds for New Play Equipment**

The Leisure Working Group had discussed the idea of using the £5,000 owed to Chatteris, sitting in the FDC Section 106 account, to purchase a new piece of play equipment for Furrowfields Recreation Ground's play park. The FDC Open Spaces Manager had sent over a



few ideas about how the money could be spent. Cllr Charrier said the area was in need of improvements.

Members agreed to request FDC release the £5,000 held in Section 106 funds so it could be spent on the Furrowfields play area.

#### **80) Summer Fun Report**

Members had received a report on the Summer Fun shows which were organised by the Clerk and funded by the Town Council. The shows were staged at the King Edward Centre on Fridays during August and regularly attracted over 100 people. The shows were free to attend and lasted for between 45 minutes to 1 hour. The only stipulation was that children had to be accompanied by a responsible adult.

The first show by Booster Cushion had been held on Friday and had been a great success, with a lovely group of children keen to get involved in the show. The other three entertainers would be Sammy Magic, Jezo and Stripey Wipey (a particular favourite of the children). The Clerk said next year would be the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the first Summer Fun show.

#### **81) Parking Issues & LHI Scheme Suggestions**

The Council had been approached about parking issues in three areas of the town.

A resident of George Way had approached the Mayor to request 'No Motor Vehicle' and 'Except for Access' signs at the top of the road as the road was being used to park HGVs, commercial vehicles, cars that parked up all day with their occupants going off in another vehicle, vehicle traders, youths parking to smoke cannabis and consume takeaway food and even a couple parking up to have intercourse. Highways had suggested the Town Council should apply for double yellow lines.

A resident of Allens Yard had written in saying it was often impossible to exit and enter the Yard (which is off East Park Street) due to vehicles parking on double yellow lines near the off-licence. This also caused congestion and a danger to children trying to cross the roads in the area. The resident had suffered abuse when he tackled a motorist blocking the entrance of Allens Yard.

A resident of the Old Auction Yard had complained that cars were continually causing a nuisance by parking on the double yellow lines in the yard.

It was agreed the police should be asked to take action on the complaints about Allens Yard and Old Auction Yard. It was also agreed to ask the County Council to re-paint the yellow lines in East Park Street at the junction with Allen's Yard. With regards to George Way, members agreed they were not in favour of applying for an LHI to pay for the signs but the residents could pay for the signs and the necessary traffic order, like the residents of Boadicea Court who paid for their road's double yellow lines.

Cllr Gowler said he was preparing a case to argue for an LHI grant to improve the junction of New Road and the A142. He was suggesting a reduction in the speed limit and improved signage. Cllr Selman said there was also a need to improve the vision for motorists leaving New Road and Cllr Gowler said the area should be exempt from such schemes as 'No Mow May'.

Cllr Benney said there was talk of Anglian Water putting in a roundabout at the junction as part of the reservoir project and the Mayor said she was concerned that if there were improvements to the junction a roundabout might be seen as unnecessary. Cllr Gowler said he saw the improvements he was suggesting as a short to medium term solution. Cllr Benney said the roundabout would go in at the beginning of the reservoir project.

## 82) Traffic Issues

Car Park: Notification had been received of improvement works to the Eastwood Car Park. The works began on the 29<sup>th</sup> July.

Zebra Crossings: Notification had been received that the new zebra crossings in Bridge Street and East Park Street had not been advertised prior to their installation and that process was now taking place with residents being given 21 days to make representations. The Council would reflect on any representations before making a decision on whether to retain the crossings!

Reported Concerns: Cllr Gowler had written to the Mayor, in her capacity as County Councillor, asking if the lines on the road in Station Street, opposite the junction with Burnsfield Street, could be refreshed and consideration given to the installation of a zebra crossing to make it safer for children crossing the road to reach Kingsfield Primary School. Cllr Ashley had reported that newly laid cabling in St Peter's Drive had damaged the recently re-surfaced footpaths. The Clerk had reported the broken up footpath along the A142 and had been assured maintenance works would be carried out in the current financial year.

Planned Works: Notification had been received of asphalt works due to take place in Wenny Estate and the Fairviews from the 9<sup>th</sup> September, and the granting of orders for works in Station Street (already underway) and Warboys Road, Bury. Works had also been carried out at Langwood Hill Drive.

Road works: The latest lists of planned road works in Fenland had been received, along with a list of events affecting the Highways in the County and the Traffic Management statistics for July 2024

## 83) Correspondence

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

Broadband: Cllr Benney was concerned that roads and footpaths could be dug up again to install the cabling for the broadband service.

**84) Reports**

Members had received a copy of a written report from Cllr Selman on the Fens Reservoir Liaison Group meeting held on the 15<sup>th</sup> July. Attendees received an update on the project.

**85) Items for the Next Agenda**

It was agreed to put LHI ideas on the agenda for the next meeting. Cllr Selman asked about the memorial plaque for Florence Newell and the Clerk said one of the town's undertakers had offered to create one for a donation to charity and was working on a marble memorial stone.