

# CHATTERIS TOWN COUNCIL

## Minutes Dated 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2024

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Minutes of a meeting of Chatteris Town Council held on Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2024 at the King Edward Centre, King Edwards Road, Chatteris.

**Present:** Cllrs A Hay (Mayor) I Benney (Deputy Mayor), L Ashley, J Carney, A Gowler, V Joyce, P Murphy, S Selman, M Siggee and S Unwin.

### 47) To Accept Apologies for Absence

Cllrs A Charrier and K Perrin had sent apologies for absence.

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

Cllrs Benney and Murphy declared an interest in all planning applications. Cllr Unwin declared an interest as a member of In Bloom and the Midsummer Festival committee, Cllr Selman as a driver for the Community Car scheme and Chairman of the Festival committee, Cllr Ashley as a trustee of the museum and member of the Festival committee. Cllrs Hay and Murphy as trustees of the museum and the King Edward Centre. Cllr Siggee declared an interest as a trustee of the King Edward Centre.

### 49) Open Forum

Cllr C Marks was the only member of the public present and did not wish to speak so it was agreed to move on to the next item on the agenda.

### 50) Minutes of Last Meetings

The minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> June 2024 were agreed and signed by the Mayor as a correct record, as were the minutes of the Annual Town Meeting held on Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2024.

### 51) Matters Arising from the Minutes

Min 27) KEC: Cllr Ashley had spoken to Cllr Charrier who wished to continue as a trustee of the King Edward Centre having been elected to the role in May 2023.

Min 44) Illegal Encampment: Members had received a copy of an email sent to Cllr Marks, from FDC's enforcement officer, updating him on the illegal encampment at Horseway. The officer said over 40 areas of land had been subject to some form of development resulting in potential breaches of planning control spanning over more than 70 of the plots. The next step was to identify the owners of the plots which had been developed and register each of the plots of land on the Council's spatial database. The Council would then raise cases for each of the potential breaches of planning control and would be seeking to serve formal

requisitions for information. Councillors thanked Cllr Marks for his hard work in encouraging FDC to take enforcement action.

## 52) Police Matters

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

### Local Police

Copy of round-up from the Fenland response team was attached to the report.

### Neighbourhood Alerts

13& 25/6/24: Request for nominations of Neighbourhood Watch volunteers for Volunteer Recognition Awards 2024.

14/6/24: Notification that a man died after his car entered the Forty Foot River near Chatteris and request for witnesses to come forward.

21/6/24: Notification that a driver and his passenger were arrested after their car was stopped on the A141 in Chatteris and a search of the vehicle revealed a large amount of suspected stolen items.

24/6/24: Notification that detectives charged a man in connection with a series of keyless car thefts across Cambridgeshire and neighbouring counties.

25/6/24: Latest court news.

28/6/24: Revelation that 32 Million suspicious emails have been reported to the Suspicious Email Reporting Service nationally.

1/7/24: July edition of the Neighbourhood Watch newsletter Our News.

## 53) FDC and Street Scene Updates

Members had received a copy of the latest FDC and Street Scene updates (**copy attached**).

Cllr Murphy updated members on discussions with the Government and DEFRA about a weekly food waste collection service from all homes. The discussions had been ongoing for two years. There had been concerns about the costs but DEFRA had now offered several million pounds to Cambridgeshire to make it happen and FDC would be spending their allocation on purchasing the 10 additional vehicles which would be needed. They would also need to purchase indoor and outdoor caddies. The new system would mean that the brown bins would be exclusively for garden waste and full instructions would be given on what to do, said Cllr Murphy.

## 54) Financial Officer's Report

Members had before them a budgetary control statement for the Revenue (Precept) Account as at 25<sup>th</sup> June 2024 showing expenditure of £210,141.27 income of £249,181.65

(includes 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.

#### 55) Payment of Accounts

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

|                                 |  |           |
|---------------------------------|--|-----------|
| Payroll                         | July Payroll   | 7,569.75  |
| P Haywood                       | Back Two Summer Fest Entertainment                               | 150.00    |
| G Singh Rathore                 | Summer Fest Parade   | 50.00     |
| Rose Fire & Security            | Part payment Fire Alarm & Intruder Alarm works<br>14 Church Lane | 4,320.00  |
| Cambs CC                        | Hire Chatteris Library for Citizen's Advice                      | 306.31    |
| Cambs CC                        | Hire Chatteris Library for Citizen's Advice                      | 306.31    |
| Cambs CC                        | Hire Chatteris Library for Citizen's Advice                      | 282.75    |
| A Simpson                       | Allotment Standpipe repair                                       | 78.00     |
| Luckys Rosettes                 | Summer Fest Dog Show, Tug of War and Quiz                        | 61.80     |
| The Animal Experience           | Summer Fest show   | 360.00    |
| Zen Internet                    | Website Jul-Aug  | 13.79     |
| Barclays                        | Debit Charges  | 8.50      |
| Cllr Hay                        | Reim Civic Mileage   | 27.90     |
| JT Chambers<br>Developments Ltd | Val 8 14 Church Lane Refurb Growing Fenland                      | 43,320.00 |
| JT Chambers<br>Developments Ltd | Release of Retention   | 7,520.10  |
| R Leney                         | Summer Fest Entertainment  | 277.50    |

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|-------------------------------|--|------------------------------|
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| R J Warren                    | Little Acre Gardening Services         | 269.66                       |
| DMJ Imagery Ltd               | Video recording Summer Festival        | 50.00                        |
| Laura Dennis                  | Summer Fest Entertainment              | 200.00                       |
| Chatteris & Manea Silver Band | Summer Fest Entertainment              | 200.00                       |
| Number 1 Company<br>Cambs ACF | Summer Fest Help                       | 50.00                        |
| Laura Hodson                  | Summer Fest Dance show                 | 50.00                        |
| Cllr S Unwin                  | Flower display Reimbursement           | 20.00                        |
| Clerk                         | Reim: Sundries                         | 82.99                        |
| SSE Energy Solutions          | Elec Bill 2 Park Street                | 2,414.04                     |
| R J Warren                    | Gardening Services, open spaces        | 756.84                       |
| David J Richards              | Folded leaflets FACT Bus               | 117.91                       |
| British Gas                   | Elec Bill 14A Church Lane              | 13.68                        |
| British Gas                   | Elec Bill 14B Church Lane              | 13.68                        |
| Cllr Selman                   | Reim Ink Cartridges re:<br>Town Guide  | 41.95                        |
| Cllr Selman                   | Reim Paper re: Town Guide              | 10.09                        |
| D Smith                       | Summer Fest Entertainment              | 20.00                        |
| YK Suswain -Lee               | Expenses Reim: Dog Show<br>Summer Fest | 75.39                        |
| Abigail Miller                | Summer Fest Entertainment              | 100.00                       |
| Clerk                         | Reim Summer Fest Sundries              | 104.85                       |
|                               |  |                              |

|                      |                                 |  |
|----------------------|---------------------------------|--|
| Air Pressure Testing | Sound Testing 14 Church Lane    | <b>2575</b><br><b>5 of 9</b><br>474.00 |
| Vision ICT           | . Gov emails host names         | 336.00                                 |
| Marcellus Roberts    | Summer Fest Army Cadet Drummers | 200.00                                 |
| <b>Total</b>         |                                 | <b>70,253.79</b>                       |

The Financial officer advised members that the payment listed on the schedule of payments to SSE for 2414.04 was under dispute. SSE were the electricity suppliers to the ground floor at 2 Park Street where the Museum resided.

Members were advised that this has been under dispute since November 2023 and was still being investigated.

The Financial Officer asked for approval to pay the bill as SSE were threatening to cut off the electricity supply to the Museum because they were adamant the outstanding amount was correct.

Members were advised that the Financial Officer had sent all paperwork over to SSE and emails asking them for proof of usage as the bills that were in dispute were estimated.

Councillors agreed that the payment should be made without acceptance of liability, however they suggested going to Ofgem for help. The Financial Officer agreed to do this and advised she would also go the Utilities Ombudsman.

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

**56) To Consider Quotations for Floorings for the Flats at 14 Church Lane & to Decide on Contractor**

The Clerk presented the following report:

Members are aware of the works to create two flats at 14 Church Lane. Those works are now nearing completion and the flats are looking very smart.

As a result, I have sought three quotations from local contractors for carpets and vinyl to be laid in the two, two-bedroom flats and for roller blinds in the living areas and curtain tracks in the bedrooms (I have been advised to purchase ready-made curtains from a well-known national company as these will be considerably cheaper than having the curtains made by a local company).

Further quotes for flooring will be sought when the works to the ground floor of the building are nearing completion.

All contractors have been given the same brief to provide flooring that is hard wearing, easy to maintain and will be easy to clean in between lets.

The Quotations are as follows:

| Company | Flat 1 flooring | Flat 2 flooring | Blinds/tracks | Comment |
|---------|-----------------|-----------------|---------------|---------|
| A       | £2,470.00       | £2,334.00       | £1,469.00     | inc VAT |
| B       | £3,266.98       | £2,736.34       | No quote      | exc VAT |
| C       | £3,183.49       | £3,928.98       | £1,365.75     | exc VAT |

Conclusion: The Clerk is confident all three companies are capable of delivering the job to a high standard. It is for councillors to decide on which company they wish to employ.

Members unanimously agreed to accept the quotations from Company A and the Clerk then revealed they had agreed to the quotation from a Chatteris company.

### 57) Growing Fenland Project Update

The Clerk said whilst works on the flats were almost complete there was still some way to go at ground floor level. Works were progressing but it was taking time for the plaster, etc, to dry out. It was hoped the works would be complete by September. The Financial Officer said the Combined Authority continued to pay claims promptly.

### 58) Planning

Cllr Ashley presented the minutes of the Planning Working Group meeting held on Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> June 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) Councillors are not opposed to development of the land in principle but believe the development should be all single-storey dwellings as two-storey dwellings would be out of character in the area. Drainage issues and possible contamination of the site must be carefully managed.
- b) Support
- c) Support
- d) Support
- e) Support
- f) Support

Weed Spraying: Cllr Murphy confirmed the County Council had been out in Chatteris spraying weeds and these were now dying off. The Mayor said she was concerned that certain areas had not been sprayed and she would asking which areas had been treated.

**57) Midsummer Festival Report**

Cllr Selman, the Chairman of the Midsummer Festival committee presented the following report of the Festival:

“This year’s Chatteris Midsummer Festival was the most successful to date. There were record attendances on both the Saturday and Sunday (according to gate takings) and all the comments were positive.

It was an action packed weekend which began with the walking parade on the theme of Movies. For the first time since covid there was a very good turnout with most of the schools and nurseries taking part along with other children’s groups and a couple of adult groups. All had put a great deal of effort into their costumes and there were also some great props.

The arena entertainment was well received with the crowds glued to performances which included motorcycle stunt rider Dangerous Steve and young performers from LL Dance. The Party in the Park was another big success with music from local musicians, head-lining band the Gangsters and everyone jumping along to music from DJ Laura Dennis. There was no trouble and everything finished on time.

Sunday was aimed at families and there was so much for children to do and see starting with the fun dog show. Once again, the colour fun run was very popular and this was quickly followed by the tug of war competition and for the first time a water fight which was great fun. Bringing the afternoon’s entertainment to a close was a family disco with a foam canon which everyone loved. For those who liked their entertainment a little more sedate there were the ever popular cream teas and everyone could visit The Animal Experience for free.

The good weather certainly helped to draw the crowds but a packed programme also assisted. Stall holders were delighted by how well it was all organised.

Unfortunately, I did not attend on Saturday as I had a bad reaction to the shingles jab. Thank you to all who did attend and help: Linda, Sue, Joanna, Angela, Lucy, Kirstie and Fran and all the Festival husbands who helped before and on the weekend. As a parting signoff I would like to say thanks to Anne who joined the parade. I hope Andrew is feeling better.”

Cllr Selman went on to thank Vic who helped to dismantle the fencing at Furrowfields on the Monday and Peter who had helped at previous festivals. She said it was sad that the other Town Councillors did not help over the weekend, as it was one of the biggest events in Chatteris and she had specifically asked for help at the last meeting.

Cllr Carney said he had a family commitment on that weekend but he had helped at the Festival in the past.

**58) Fens Reservoir Consultation**

The Clerk and some councillors had attended the latest consultation event for the new Fens Reservoir . The Clerk had collected an information pack which included a feedback form for the phase two consultation. She suggested the Council should put in a joint response and

councillors should also submit their own feedback. It was agreed to go through the feedback form and decide on responses at the Leisure working group meeting on the 9<sup>th</sup> July. Cllr Selman was concerned that engagement with the public was not as good as it could have been. The Mayor was concerned there could be a low attendance at the next reservoir liaison group meeting as it was on at the same time as an FDC full council meeting.

## 59) Traffic Issues

LHI: An email had been received from a Highways Senior Manager regarding a delay in decisions on LHI applications. The Mayor explained that the Town Council's application was non-complex so would be determined by officers (along with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the transport committee) and would not need to go to a panel meeting.

20mph Signs: After a long battle the Clerk was pleased to report the 20mph speed signs in Wenny Road should now be working correctly as they had been examined and new timetables uploaded to the signs. They were programmed to July 2025 and the signs would operate Monday to Friday between 8.30-9.30 and 14.30-15.30.

The Mayor said she had met with two highways officers to discuss school flashing light schemes in Chatteris, including the 20mph signs in Wenny Road. At that time, they were not working properly and it had been agreed that money set aside for the scheme could be spent on repairs to the signs. Within a couple of days, however, they were working properly. The idea of 20mph signs at school times in Burnsfield Street (leading to Kingsfield School) had also been discussed and the Mayor had stated drivers were lucky to reach 5mph at most times and had suggested the signs should be placed in Station Street. She had also asked about a zebra crossing for Station Street. Cllr Gowler said he agreed with a school time 20mph speed limit but not all the time. He was also in agreement with the idea of a crossing and pointed out he had reported problems with the current white lines in the area several times. A keep clear sign had been rubbed out and there was no longer a school crossing patrol officer so cars parked inappropriately and made it difficult and dangerous for children to cross Station Street to access Burnsfield Street. The Mayor asked for full information and photographs so she could pass this to the two officers, who appeared to be proactive.

Temporary Traffic Orders: The following orders temporarily prohibiting traffic had been made: London Road from 9<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup> July; High Street (Furrowfields Road to Kempston Court) from 15<sup>th</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup> July; byways, footpaths and Fairview Avenue from 15<sup>th</sup> to 24<sup>th</sup> July. There were also applications to reduce the speed limit to 40mph on Fenland Way (for the construction of an access into a housing development site) from 1<sup>st</sup> August 2024 to 31<sup>st</sup> January 2026; to close part of Station Street from 5<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> August for a new electrical connection; to close Warboys Road in Bury from the 10<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> August for a new electrical connection.

Courses: A reminder had been sent out about the two Lantra Traffic Management for Community Events courses.

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 May and June 2024.



## 60) Correspondence

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

Email from Cllr Perrin. Members had a copy of the email Cllr Perrin had sent to members and the Clerk asking a number of questions about planning and development in Chatteris. They also had a copy of an email Cllr Perrin sent to the Mayor accusing her of redesignating Chatteris as a commuter town and of being predetermined in favour of huge developments. Cllr Gowler said they were disgraceful letters and he believed the letter to the Mayor was tantamount to bullying. He asked to draft a reply and suggested the Mayor should send a copy of her letter to the monitoring officer at FDC.

It was agreed most of the information requested by Cllr Perrin, in the letter to members, was available online and the remainder should be requested from FDC as the planning authority. It was pointed out Cllr Perrin had been offered the opportunity to go on planning training and had agreed to abide by the Code of Conduct when he was elected as a councillor.

The Clerk said it was possible to report a councillor for breach of the Code of Conduct but she warned there were few sanctions which could be imposed if a breach took place.

Concerns were also expressed about some of the comments made by Cllr Perrin on social media and it was agreed that these comments could be qualified with a statement that the views expressed were not the views of the Town Council.

## 61) Reports

In Bloom: Cllr Unwin said Chatteris finally had the date it would be judged for the In Bloom competition – Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> July. Unfortunately, she would not be present as she was on holiday but Cllr Unwin said she would do all she could to help get the town ready. She had asked residents to put pots outside their properties and the In Bloom Chairman Miss Anne Wells had installed a friendship boat at the Market Hill Gardens. A working party of NHS workers was expected to help prepare for In Bloom judging as part of their work for the community. Cllr Unwin was confident that the town would look good.

Shuttle Bus: Cllr Carney said it was proposed that a trial run of a shuttle bus between Chatteris and Manea railway station would take place on the 10<sup>th</sup> August, following discussions with FACT. The plan was to do three runs between Chatteris and Manea on that day and it was hoped the cost would be met by the Tesco pot of money. The Clerk agreed to ask how much remained in the pot.

Beacon Lighting: Cllr Selman thanked Cllrs Gowler and Joyce for their help with the beacon lighting ceremony to mark the 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary of D-Day. It was suggested similar events needed in future greater advertising.

## 62) Items for the Next Agenda

Cllrs Ashley and Unwin gave their apologies for the next Council meeting on the 6<sup>th</sup> August.

