

CHATTERIS TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes Dated 5th November 2024

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Minutes of a meeting of Chatteris Town Council held on Tuesday 5th November 2024 at The Council Chambers, 14 Church Lane, Chatteris.

Present: Cllrs A Hay (Mayor), L Ashley, I Benney, V Joyce, P Murphy, S Selman and S Unwin.

122) To Accept Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence had been received from Cllrs J Carney, A Gowler, A Jones (formerly Charrier), K Perrin and M Siggee.

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

Cllrs Benney and Murphy declared an interest in all planning applications. Cllrs Murphy, Hay and Ashley declared interests in the King Edward Centre and the Museum. Cllrs Ashley, Selman and Unwin declared an interest as members of the Festival committee and Cllr Unwin declared an interest as a member of Chatteris In Bloom and Cllr Selman as a driver for the Community Car scheme.

124) Open Forum

There were two members of the public, Cllr C Marks and a representative of the press present, along with Pcs Chad Hall and Zoe Pell.

The members of the public expressed a wish to address the council. The residents said they lived in Victoria Street and they were concerned about traffic issues in that street which included vehicles not adhering to the speed limit and tractors with trailers and skip lorries using the road despite the weight limit. The resident had complained to a skip provider and said there were also some lorries using the street. It was also a recognised route for buses. The resident said drains had collapsed and three of the five street lights were now not working. She had reported the problem and had been informed that it was believed to be an underground cabling issue and she suggested this had probably been damaged by the traffic. The resident said her home shook when the lorries and tractors went past. The Mayor promised to follow up the street lights problem if they were not fixed quickly and suggested the resident try and take the number plate of offending vehicles to pass to the police and to report if there was a specific time when the problems were particularly bad. Cllr Unwin said there was also a problem with traffic travelling the wrong way down the one-way street. The resident asked if it would be possible to have a 20mph speed limit on the road and for buses to use a different route by being allowed to turn at the top of St Martin's Road. The residents were thanked for attending.

125) Minutes of the Last Meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 1st October 2024 were agreed and signed by the Mayor as a correct record.

126) Matters Arising from the Minutes

There were no matters arising from the minutes other than those on the agenda.

127) Police Matters

Pcs Hall and Pell were welcomed to the meeting.

The Clerk informed members of the following:

Local Police

The Clerk had been in contact with Sgt Chris Arnold over a number of traffic issues. The initial areas of concern were:

Motorists parking on double yellow lines in the High Street, particularly opposite the New Road junction.

The junction of Clare Street and Huntingdon Road.

The entrance to Allen's Yard.

New Road junctions with St Peter's Drive and St Paul's Drive.

School time parking issues at The Orchards.

Sgt Arnold had promised to look into the issues but admitted parking near junctions was a difficult problem to solve and the only solution was words of advice.

The Clerk had then passed on complaints about mud dumped on the highway which was leading to treacherous conditions, particularly between Horseway and the A142, and complaints about road traffic safety and noise in East Park Street from modified cars racing up and down.

On the former Sgt Arnold sent through the legislation and said the County Council had to take ownership and deal with road safety matters although the police could support with some enforcement if they could evidence the required criteria. County Highways had then stated it was up to the police to take action.

On the latter Sgt Arnold said officers would take noise monitoring equipment with them when they were patrolling in Chatteris. He had also informed road policing colleagues and the Vision Zero team.

Neighbourhood Alert

Members had a roundup of the emails received from Neighbourhood Alert over the month which included notification that a closure order had been served on Flat 4, Compass House, Bridge Street, Chatteris, following concerns about anti-social behaviour. The order was in place until 14th January.

With reference to the parking issues at The Orchards, the Clerk said she had had a visit from another resident of The Orchards who had confirmed there was no problem with cars parking

in the Orchards at school times. He said the cars did not block driveways and the drivers were usually considerate to residents. The cars were only parked for a short while each day and he admitted he and others missed them in the holidays.

Pc Hall and Pc Pell explained they were the two neighbourhood police officers for Chatteris but they also had other roles within the force and they were, therefore, very stretched but tried to visit Chatteris as often as they could. The officers were asked if they could keep an eye on Victoria Street and agreed to do so.

Pc Pell said much of their work was pro-active and they were sometimes present but in an unmarked car. Pc Hall said the officers had been busy with closure orders. Four addresses in Chatteris had been closed as a result of drugs offences.

Cllr Murphy asked if there was any officer available who could ticket illegally parked vehicles, particularly in the High Street. Cllr Ashley agreed stating cars parked on double yellow lines and on speed humps, particularly opposite the New Road junction, were creating a danger and it was an accident waiting to happen. Pc Hall said he understood councillors frustrations and when they had the time officers would try to ticket but incidents such as arresting domestic violence perpetrators had to take precedence.

With regards to the problems of mud on the road, Pc Hall said it was the County Council's duty to ensure the roads were clean and the police could only prosecute if they actually caught the vehicle dropping mud, they could not take action retrospectively. Pc Pell said they could give words of advice.

The officers were thanked for attending.

128) FDC & Street Scene Updates

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

129) Financial Officer's Report

Members had before them a budgetary control statement for the Revenue (Precept) Account as at 29th October 2024 showing expenditure of £379,746.99 and income of £440,819.67 (includes a full year's precept income) compared with budgets, along with a bank reconciliation statement and a summary statement of reserves and funds balances.

Local government pay increase

Members were advised that the pay increase for local government staff had been agreed and was back dated from 1st April 2024.

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

130) Payment of Accounts

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

Barclays	Bank Charges	8.50
T Payne & Co	Management fee 14A Church Lane	72.00
ICO	Renewal of membership	35.00
David J Richards	Design & print large maps	554.75
Clerk	Reim various items for Summer Fest & Remembrance Day	256.24
S Gibb	Cleaning Council Offices	28.00
Cllr Selman	Reim various items for Summer Fest fund raising	95.44
Cllr Selman	Reim Mileage	24.30
Art on Glass	50% payment re: replace glass at council offices	186.00
Lovell & Ward	Supply & fit blinds in council offices	738.00
Rural Cambs CAB	Face to Face service	1,587.25
Zen Internet	Website Oct-Nov	13.79
F/Officer	Reim Screwfix sundries	88.20
Clerk	Reim office furniture	1,637.85
David J Richards	FACT Bus leaflets	106.34
Wave	Church Lane water bill	81.16
Wave	RHS Allotments water bill	67.80
Onecom	Phone bill Aug 31st	100.37

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Warren access	Hire cherry picker for Xmas lights (98977)	5 of 11 456.00
Warren access	Hire cherry picker (99042)	456.00
Race Support	Snagging works at Council offices	200.00
Viking	Stationary order	99.24
Warren access	Hire of cherry picker (99111)	456.00
Warren access	Hire of cherry picker (99168)	456.00
Anglian Players	CTC Vol Organisation grant	300.00
Camsar	CTC Vol Organisation grant	300.00
Chatteris Cricket Club	CTC Vol Organisation grant	300.00
B Wickenden	Reim Allotment rent over payment	31.83
Chatteris Christmas Lights Fund	Festival stall at Xmas lights switch on	12.50
F/Officer	Reim 2nd class stamps	40.80
R J Warren	Little Acre gardening services	134.83
R J Warren	Open spaces & parks gardening services	756.84
PEAC UK	New photocopier lease	336.00
KECCA	CTC Vol Organisation grant	12,000.00
Payroll	Payroll November	8,374.68
Zen Internet	Nov-Dec	13.79
Total		30,634.33

131) Young Peoples' Well Being Café Update

Members were advised that the Well Being Café was very popular and the number of young people stopping off for a hot chocolate and a chat on their way home from school had increased to an average of 75-80 a week.

Consequently, this had increased the cost of supplies and workload. The knock-on effect meant that the price per session would increase by approximately £35.00-£39.00.

The Financial Officer advised that there was enough in the budget to cover the increase, however, she had asked Youths of Fenland (who delivered the service) to clarify how many weeks were left in the current financial year and exactly how much the increase per session would be.

She recommended that Members should agree to continue with the Well Being Café as it was proving to be an important service to the young people of Chatteris.

Cllr Selman asked the Financial Officer to suggest that the service provider should go to Tesco's to see if they would be willing to provide some of the supplies, which would help with the additional costs.

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

132) Growing Fenland Project Update

The Clerk was able to give the good news that the tenant of 14b had finally been able to move in, that day. There had been difficulties in getting building control to issue a final certificate, which had been time consuming but the certificates had finally been issued on the 1st November after much chasing by the Clerk and the Financial Officer.

MarketPlace had begun using one of the community rooms twice a month on a Monday, Specsavers were hiring a room for hearing tests on a Tuesday and Thursday and Citizens Advice would hold sessions at 14 Church Lane on Wednesdays, beginning the following day.

Cllr Unwin said she wished to propose a vote of thanks to the Clerk and the Financial Officer, who had gone over and above what they usually did to deliver the Growing Fenland project.

The Financial Officer said from the financial side of the project she was pleased to be able to report that the project would be delivered within budget. The latest claim to the Combined Authority would be the last as all their grant budget had been claimed. The remaining sums would come from the £50,000 pledged by the Town Council for the project. To date £16,827 of that sum had been spent and outstanding costs included the final retention sum for the builder, professional fees and furniture. The Financial Officer estimated there would be about £26,000 left in the budget when outstanding costs had been met.

She said the priority for the remaining budget should be solving the damp problems at 2 Park Street (the museum). The previous conservation officer had not allowed the installation of a damp proof course (despite schemes being put forward by an expert) and as a result there were major issues with damp. It was hoped the new conservation officer might be more sympathetic to a damp proof system. There had also been suggestions that problems with the guttering and drains might be adding to the issue so these would also be investigated.

133) Planning

Cllr Ashley presented the minutes of the planning working group meeting held on the 29th October (**copy attached**). The meeting had not been quorate so it had not been possible to make decisions on the planning applications. As a result all applications were considered at the meeting (Cllrs Benney and Marks left the room while the plans were discussed).

It was agreed to return the planning applications (shown on the **appended list**) to Fenland District Council marked as follows:

- a) Noted
- b) Support
- c) Support
- d) Support
- e) Recommend Refusal, same reasons as previously stated
- f) Support
- g) Support
- h) Support
- i) Support
- j) Support

The Clerk had received a copy of a letter of complaint sent from a resident of Stocking Drove to the planning department at Fenland District Council. The resident said he had been monitoring the situation at Wildflower Barn, Stocking Drove, over the summer and considered the development, which had been given permission by FDC, to be unacceptable. After taking further advice, he believed that a breach of the planning process had taken place. The resident complained about the noise and disturbances created by those hiring the “party house”. The planning application had been recommended for refusal by the Town Council.

134) FDC Infrastructure Plan

Cllrs Ashley and Joyce had considered the various aspects of infrastructure, as outlined in an email from FDC’s monitoring officer, and had put forward recommendations on whether those infrastructure requirements were critical, high, middle or low priority.

Members considered the recommendations and changed a few of the classifications. The following report, outlining the requirements for Chatteris, was submitted to FDC:

Transport

Road improvements, cycle and pedestrian facilities (in particular a safe crossing for pedestrians from Bridge Street to Doddington Road) – **Critical**

Bus improvements – **High Priority**

Rail, travel management, waterways, port and car parking – **Low Priority** (and in some cases N/A)

Energy

Electricity and gas generation and provision, provision of public electrical charging points for cars – **Critical**

Water & Drainage

Keep drains and dykes clear, improve water supply and pressure, flood defences - **Critical**

Waste Collection & Management – **Low Priority** (current provision is good)

ICT Broadband & Wireless – **Critical** (especially in the centre of town)

Open Space

Provision of more sports pitches – **Critical**

Parks, children's play areas, sports courts, country parks & natural green space – **Middle Priority**

Wildlife & Biodiversity – **Middle Priority**

Education

Nursery and pre-school provision – **Critical**

Primary, secondary, further education and higher education – **Middle Priority**

Health

Hospitals, health centres/GP surgeries, public health and prevention – **Critical**

Community Services

Youth centre – **High Priority**

Libraries, community centres, social services, over 50s support, police, fire & rescue, ambulance, cemeteries and crematoria, courts, prisons, hostels, places of worship, post offices, children's centres, special needs and disability – **Low Priority** (current provision is good)

Culture & Leisure

Swimming Pool – **High Priority**

Museum/galleries, theatres/venues, cinemas, sports centres, events, festivals and town centre programmes/markets – **Middle Priority**

135) Scoping Consultation for New Reservoir

The Clerk said the Town Council had been identified as a consultation body on the Scoping Opinion for the Fens Reservoir and had been asked to inform the Planning Inspectorate of anything it believed should be included in the Scoping Opinion. Members agreed to submit the following observation:

Under the description of the project (being put forward by Anglian Water and Cambridge Water) most of the aspects which should be covered by the Scoping Opinion are outlined.

However, the Town Council believes the Scoping Opinion should also look at the impact on existing roads and the need for improvements, the provision of an underpass from Chatteris to the site and landscaping.

Councillors had received a copy of the report on the most recent reservoir liaison group meeting written by Cllr Selman, who said Cllr Marks had impressed on the representatives from Anglian Water the need to visit and consult with small communities.

136) Disabled Parking Bay Request

Notification had been received of an application to Cambridgeshire County Council to install a disabled persons parking bay for a resident in The Elms. Members had no objections to the application.

137) Leisure & General Purposes Working Group Meeting Report & Recommendations

Cllr Joyce presented the minutes of the Leisure and General Purposes Working Group Meeting held on the 22nd October 2024 (**copy attached**).

L31) Defibrillator: The Mayor thanked Cllr Joyce for painting the telephone kiosk.

L34) FACT Bus: Members agreed with the recommendations that the cost of the Cambridge bus should rise to £2 for adults and £1 for children from the 1st January 2025. They also agreed that the Chatteris to Manea Station service should cease.

L35) Football Facilities: The Clerk said she was trying to organise a meeting between Mr Andy Coles of Sport England and representatives of the Football Club so they could discuss the need for more football pitches.

138) Arrangements for Remembrance Sunday

The Clerk said the Remembrance parade would muster at Furrowfields car park at 2pm on Sunday 10th November 2024 (ready to set off at 2.30pm) and would parade along the High Street to the war memorial in Market Hill where a wreath laying ceremony would take place followed by a service in the Parish Church at 3pm.

She reminded members that Chatteris Town Council was now responsible for organising the road closures and said she had successfully applied for a temporary road closure order from Cambridgeshire County Council and had put up all the necessary notices. She had also arranged for Ringways to carry out the road closures and would be supervising on the day. A risk assessment had also been drawn up.

The Royal British Legion would be responsible for organising the parade on the day and the wreath laying ceremony. The Clerk encouraged all Councillors to take part in the parade and observe the wreath laying ceremony.

139) Traffic Issues

LHI: As reported by the Mayor, the Clerk had received official confirmation that the Council had been successful in its bid for LHI funding to warn motorists on the A141 (Fenland Way) that pedestrians and cyclists could be crossing. The Clerk had agreed to meet a highways officer to discuss the scheme.

Notification had also been received that the LHI application window for the 2025/26 funding round had opened and would stay open until the 10th January. The Clerk said she would begin work on applying for funding for the agreed scheme.

Update: The Mayor had been informed that a joint site meeting had been held to look at a scheme to provide a continuous footway along Dock Road and Short Nightlayers Drove with a view to producing a draft report for December.

Horseway Junction: Cllr Marks had copied the council into correspondence with County Highways regarding the dangers of the B1098/Byall Fen Drove (Horseway) junction which had been the site of a number of accidents, with cars leaving the road and ending up in a field. Cllr Marks had asked for a site visit to view the road surface and the signage in all directions. As a follow up, Cllr Marks said some signs had gone up.

York Road: An email had been received regarding the parking problems in York Road and asking if it was OK to park on double yellow lines. Members noted the email and pointed out the problems had existed for many years.

Traffic Order: Notification had been received that a temporary prohibition of traffic order had been made stopping vehicles proceeding along Dock Road from 19th November to 18th May 2026. It was anticipated that the highways works would take place on the 19th and 20th November.

Roadworks: After many changes of date, the re-surfacing works in Fairview had taken place. 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 TMC report for September.

140) Correspondence

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

Weed Treatment: Cllr Unwin was concerned that the weeds were not being sprayed, it was the footpaths which were being sprayed.

CAB: The Mayor said she would be attending Citizens Advice Rural Cambs' AGM.

141) Reports

Training Centre: Cllr Benney said he had met with the manager of the North Cambridgeshire Training Centre and he had stated he was happy to attend a Council meeting to explain what went on at the centre and take questions. It was agreed to ask him along to a Leisure & General Purposes Working Group meeting and open the meeting to all councillors. The Mayor said she had also been along to the centre and whilst the engineering courses were doing well the further education classes were not as well supported and needed to be

Promoted.

Volunteers: Cllr Unwin said she had attended a seminar for volunteers at the library.

Unfortunately, the seminar had not been well attended but she had met the Support Fenland development officers who were able to offer groups help with training and guidance on policies. The officers were currently running a “Love It, Hate It and Shape It” project to find out what people liked and disliked about Chatteris. (Cllr Ashley and the Clerk had met with them to give their views). They were also planning a fair for youths who were interested in volunteering. Also attending the seminar were representatives of the foodbank, the Care Network and the Barnardo’s Children’s Centre. The next seminar was planned for February.

Aerotron: Cllr Benney said he had also spoken to the person in charge of Aerotron and he was willing to come along to a Council meeting to speak about their work. Cllr Benney gave examples and said it was very interesting. He said Aerotron were keen to get more involved in the community and raise their profile.

142) Items for the Next Agenda

No items were put forward for the next agenda.