

# CHATTERIS TOWN COUNCIL

## Minutes Dated 6<sup>th</sup> July 2021

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Minutes of a meeting of Chatteris Town Council held on Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> July 2021 at the King Edward Centre, Chatteris.

**Present:** Councillors L Ashley (Mayor), I Benney (Deputy Mayor), A Gowler, W Haggata, A Hay, P Murphy and F Newell.

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

Apologies for absence had been received from Cllrs J Carney, A Charrier, M Petrou, J Smith and I Taylor.

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

Cllrs Benney and Murphy declared an interest in all planning matters as members of FDC's planning committee.

### **51) Open Forum**

The Mayor welcomed two members of the public to the meeting. The residents of Willey Terrace said they had asked residents living in the Doddington Road area to sign a petition calling for the speed limit to be reduced to 30mph from 40mph and for traffic calming measures. Almost all residents living in the area had signed the petition. The residents said the 40mph limit was not adhered to and there had been many near misses and three fatalities as far as they were aware.

The couple were keen to see the speed reduced to 30mph before motorists entered Curf and Willey Terraces and for the speed limit from Carter's bridge to that point to also be reduced. Details of speeding motorists had been passed to the police who had also recorded speeds on occasions but this was usually during the daytime and motorists were warned by other motorists. The residents argued it would only be effective if checks were carried out early in the morning and at teatime.

Another resident had submitted ideas for traffic calming measures which were passed to councillors.

The couple described how speeding lorries shook their home and how a car travelling at 30-35mph had been overtaken. Cllr Benney asked if the MVAS unit, which had been erected as motorists entered the town, had been effective. The resident admitted motorists had slowed up on seeing it but were confused when it read 30mph in a 40mph limit. Her partner offered to change the batteries of the unit if it would help.

The couple were thanked for attending and were assured Councillors would discuss the matter later in the meeting.

## 52) Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> June 2021 were agreed and signed by the Mayor as a correct record.

## 53) Matters Arising from the Minutes

Min 38) Growing Fenland Project: Cllr Hay asked if FDC had been approached about issuing improvement notices for properties in the town centre in need of repair. The Clerk said she would make enquiries.

Min 39) FACT Bus: The Transport Manager for FACT, Ms Sharon Bettenson, had confirmed they were happy to start the bus service to Peterborough and just needed a start date. It had been agreed not to restart the bus to St Ives while the V2 was running but to consider it again if the service was withdrawn after the trial period ended, believed to be in September. The Mayor suggested aiming for a September start for the monthly bus service to Peterborough and it was agreed to advertise the new service which would begin on the 4<sup>th</sup> September 2021.

## 54) Police Matters

Members had received the following report:

### Local Issues

Members have already received a copy of the confidential report from Sgt Richard Lugg following his meeting with the Mayor and other Council leaders on Thursday June 3<sup>rd</sup>. Sgt Lugg had a further meeting with the Mayor on the 25<sup>th</sup> June after she raised concerns about continuing ASB by youngsters in the town.

The Clerk queried if the CCTV cameras in Wenny Recreation Ground were working following an incident in the park and was assured they were by CCTV control.

The Clerk has received an email from a resident of Park Street concerned about youths accessing the former Barclays Bank car park and from there vandalising the Emmanuel Church, the former bank and properties in Park Street.

### Neighbourhood Alerts

4/6/21: Notification that phishing remains the most successful attack vector for cyber criminals with over 5m suspicious emails reported. Advice on how to protect yourself from such emails.

14/6/21: Request to complete an on-line survey about whether the pandemic has made people more or less aware of online risks.

15/6/21: Information about a Citizens Advice led scams awareness campaign.

16/6/21: Update on drug dealers from Chatteris taken to and dealt with by the courts.

22/6/21: Information about a Covid vaccine passport scam.

25/6/21: Request to complete a survey into how safe people feel in Cambridgeshire.

28/6/21: Information about free weekly online webinars which expose the truths behind scams.

1/7/21: Information about ghost brokers, offering cheap insurance premiums, and how to protect yourself.

5/7/21: Neighbourhood Watch newsletter including details of a scam awareness campaign.

The Mayor said the police were hoping to issue Criminal Behaviour Orders and as requested she had made a statement. She had also been asked about the possibility of removing benches and seats in certain public areas where youths gathered but she had been firmly against the idea as they were also used by other residents. Councillors backed her comments. Cllr Benney said Fenland District Councillors were meeting with the new Police and Crime Commissioner and Inspector Lombardo to discuss on-going problems with anti-social behaviour and drugs in all the Fenland towns.

A discussion on the issues and possible solutions took place and members were keen to know if incidents were being recorded by the CCTV cameras and if the police were informed about the incidents. The CCTV update showed 20 incidents had been recorded in Chatteris in May (a large increase from the previous months) but the number of arrests/fixed penalty notices issued was 0. Members suggested querying this figure and asking how many of the incidents were acted upon.

### **55) FDC, Street Scene, CCTV & Section 106 Updates**

The latest updates were noted by members (**copy attached**).

Members were asked for their views on the monthly updates. In particular they were asked: if they were happy with the content or if they felt some information was missing; if they were happy with the format and the frequency of the newsletters.

Members agreed the newsletters should continue to be monthly and they particularly liked the updates on litter and dog fouling and comparisons with other areas. They asked if it was possible to include more contact details for FDC officers.

Cllr Gowler reported that Mr Aarron Locks was organising a CCTV liaison group meeting on the 26<sup>th</sup> August.

### **56) Financial Officer's Report**

Members had before them a budgetary control statement for the Revenue (Precept) Account as at 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2021 showing expenditure of £146,846.99 and income of £166,999.10 (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.

The Financial Officer reminded members that the Lloyds investment had been transferred to the Barclays Business Premium Account bringing the sum in that account to £241,469. She

warned members that only £85,000 of that sum was covered by the FSCS compensation scheme.

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

### 57) Payment of Accounts

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

Financial Officer	Payroll July 2021	1,325.48
Clerk	Payroll July 2021	1,845.34
Pension Fund	Payroll July 2021	1,126.21
HMRC	Payroll July 2021	996.01
British Gas	Gas bill	300.26
Barclays Bank	Bank Charges	6.50
Zen Internet	Website June-July	10.79
Y K Suswain-Lee	Expenses re dog show Summer Fest	61.70
R J Warren	Gardening Services & Pocket Park	857.10
British Gas	Elec bill	27.88
David J Richards	Summer Festival Leaflets printing	236.00
Viking payments	Stationary order KEC	135.89
Viking payments	Stationary order	201.77
Onecom	June monthly phone bill	80.32
H E Spall	Summer Festival Photographer	100.00
Cable Test	Refurb CCTV & FDC Street lights columns	2,286.00
Clerk	Reim: monthly Zoom payment & Summer Festival sundries	149.62
N Patchett	Deposit re sound equipment hire Summer Festival	408.60

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N Patchett	Remaining balance re sound equipment hire Summer Festival	<b>5 of 10</b> 500.00
Stuart Green	Performer Summer Festival	100.00
Ben Payne	Allotments road repair remaining balance, work completed	800.00
Lucky's Rosettes	Dog Show rosettes Summer Festival	31.74
KECCA	Hire of Annex Fit n Fed Camp Youth Club	108.00
Mayor	Reim of ink	32.46
Ely Foodbank	Chatteris Foodbank Mayors Charity	100.00
R Leney	Microphone Services Summer Festival	100.00
Booster Cushion	Summer Fun	360.00
PC OK	Office computer repair	50.00
<b>Total</b>		<b>12,337.67</b>

#### **58) Grants to Voluntary Organisations**

The Financial Officer advised Members that no grant applications had been received for consideration at the meeting.

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

#### **59) To Consider Youth Provision and Extending Connections Bus Funding**

Members had received copies of a number of emails from youth providers in the town as follows:

Connections Bus – had sent attendance figures, an update and had stated the cost of continuing the visits of the outdoor youth club throughout the summer holidays would be £180 per session.

Chatteris Focus on Youth Group – the minutes of the latest meeting (attended by the Clerk) had been received along with an update on work undertaken since the meeting which stated a number of agencies were looking to work together to develop a youth club for 11 to 17 year olds in the town. The youth co-ordinator Kerrie Tonks had also confirmed that if the Town Council was willing to sponsor evening sessions of the connections bus during the summer holidays she had found the funding for a second weekly session which would be held in the afternoons.

Youth Venue – Pc Kurt Allen had emailed about his search for a building where young people could meet up. He believed this would help with the youth related anti-social

behaviour in the town. He also spoke of plans to contact the owners of the former Budgens shop in the centre of the town and ask them to secure the building which appeared to be at the epicentre of the ASB.

Pump track – a resident had sought the council's views on plans to build a pump track in the town which could be used as a community area for teenagers, kids and families with bikes, skateboards, skates and scooters.

Other schemes – details had been received of the Holiday Activity and Food programme which would provide free holiday provision for children in receipt of benefits related to free school meals. There was also information on courses and activities running at Barnardo's Child and Family Centres, including a fun splash at the Chatteris centre on the 4<sup>th</sup> August.

Connections Bus – Members **agreed** to continue funding the connections bus through the summer holidays at a cost of £180 a session (the sessions to be held weekly on a Tuesday evening) as Focus on Youth had found funding for an additional weekly, afternoon session.

Pump Track: Cllr Murphy said March was looking at a pump track and he warned that developing such a track would cost a six figure sum. There were also concerns about who would maintain and insure such a track. Although councillors supported the idea and did not want to discourage those behind it, it was felt the organisers should be informed that neither the Town Council nor Fenland District Council had suitable land for a pump track.

Youth Venue – The Mayor said she believed the plan was to open the youth club at the Emmanuel Church but Councillors pointed out this would only work if it was open regularly and not just once or twice a week. Cllr Haggata, who along with Cllr Newell had tried to get a youth venue open at Wenny Café, warned that teenagers did not wish to attend a formal youth club they wanted somewhere they could hang out with their friends. He said it was a shame an entrepreneur could not open such a place. Cllr Benney was concerned it would be seen as rewarding the troublemakers while the vast majority of children who were good kids were not rewarded. If troublemakers attended the venue good kids would stay away. Members agreed 11 to 17 years was not a good mix of youths, 14 to 17 years would be better.

## 60) Planning

Cllr Haggata presented the minutes of the Planning Working Group meeting held on Tuesday 30<sup>th</sup> June 2021 (**copy attached**). Members ratified the group's recommendations on applications b) to f) (as shown on the **appended list**) and considered a) and two further applications. Unfortunately the Clerk had been unable to obtain any further information on a) from Fenland District Council. It was agreed to return the planning applications to Fenland District Council marked as follows:

- a) Will support Fenland District Council Tree Officer's recommendation
- b) Support
- c) Support

- d) Support. Request consideration is given to double yellow lines to prevent parking problems at school drop off and pick up times and to ensure proper visibility for motorists leaving development. (Cllr Smith favoured double yellow lines down the development roadway). Support idea of an archaeological dig and investigation of any possible asbestos contamination.
- e) Support
- f) Support
- g) Support
- h) Support

The Clerk confirmed the meeting with Persimmon Homes would be in the council chambers at 7pm on the 27<sup>th</sup> July. It would not be a public meeting but all town councillors were welcome to attend.

### **61) Growing Fenland Update**

Councillors were delighted to learn that the Chatteris Museum and 14 Church Lane project had been awarded £771,821 by the Combined Authority as part of the Growing Fenland Market Towns programme.

Cllr Haggata proposed a vote of thanks to Cllr Benney for his chairmanship of the Growing Fenland group and for carrying the project forward and to the Clerk and Financial Officer for pushing the project forward.

When the good news had been announced on Facebook there had been the usual critics and Cllr Benney spoke of his plans to answer the critics and put a positive spin on the story by explaining how the project met the objectives and criteria of the Market Towns programme.

The museum would be in a bigger and better location and the changes to 14 Church Lane would not only create a new community space and more space for the council but would generate extra funding which would be used to help other projects in the town. The museum would be supported by income from renting out the first floor of the former Barclays Bank.

One suggestion had been that the money should have been spent on a new swimming pool and Cllr Benney said he would explain that not only was there a shortfall of at least £2m on build costs but there would also be the running costs of a swimming pool which would impact on council taxpayers. Cllr Benney pointed out the criticism would have been justified if Chatteris had missed out on the money available to the town. As it was the money would allow the Town Council to purchase another property, an additional asset for the town.

Councillors and the Clerk also thanked Mr Phil Hughes at FDC who had delivered the application which had won the grant funding.

**62) Leisure & General Purposes Working Group Report & Recommendations**

In the absence of the Chairman and Vice Chairman, the Mayor presented the minutes of the Leisure and General Purposes Working Group meeting held on Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> June 2021 (**copy attached**).

L13) FDC Update: Cllr Hay said when she had reported an area of land at the junction of Farriers Gate and New Road had not been cut by FDC's contractors, she had discovered it was

on an old cutting map but not the new map. Cllr Murphy said the land was unregistered but the contractors had been instructed to include it on the new map along with all the public land up to the Army Cadet hut. The Mayor reported a piece of land at the junction of St Peter's Drive and New Road had also been missed along with an area near the St Paul's Drive play area and an area in Horsegate Gardens. Other areas had not been cut well. The FDC open spaces officer had been out inspecting areas. It was agreed the new map should be compared to the old cutting map. Cllr Murphy offered to take up the issues.

L15) Old Railway Line: Cllr Hay said she had followed up complaints that the Old Railway Line footpath had not been cut. She had discovered it had only been cut to 2 metres width and should have been cut to 4 metres but had been promised the contractors would return to complete the work.

**63) To Consider Grant Fund for Queen's Platinum Jubilee Celebrations**

The idea of the Council taking on the role of co-ordinator for Chatteris events to mark the Queen's Platinum Jubilee in 2022, as proposed by the Leisure Working Group, was discussed as was the idea of offering small grants to help fund events.

Members were sceptical of the idea of encouraging street parties but asked the Clerk to investigate further the closure of roads for street parties.

Cllr Hay suggested a budget of £5,000 could be set aside with a maximum grant sum that could be sought to stage an event.

Members were asked to consider ideas for celebrations and levels of funding and report back to the next meeting.

**64) Midsummer Festival Report**

Members had received the following report:

"Multi-coloured, happy children were proof that the first ever colour fun run in Chatteris was a resounding success. About 150 people, ranging in age from toddlers to grandparents, took



part in the run around Furrowfields Recreation as part of a scaled down Midsummer Festival. The event was sponsored by Jacks supermarket.

As they ran past four colour stations the competitors were sprayed with colourful neon powder paints resulting in rainbow appearances as they passed the finish line to collect their medals, sweets and bottles of water.

The fun run will undoubtedly become an annual feature like the fun dog show which once again attracted a large number of entries.

The organisers had always planned a Covid-safe event by eliminating elements of the traditional festival which resulted in large crowds gathering – such as the parade, party in the park and arena attractions – and ensuring everything took place outdoors but they ended up fighting hard to keep the fun run and dog show. They were unfortunately forced to pull the live music aspect of the Festival at the last minute following an emergency SAG meeting.

FDC officers supported the Festival committee and spoke in favour of the event trying to assure certain SAG members that the event planned was fully compliant with Level 3 of the Covid restrictions but those members remained unconvinced and the Clerk was forced, with just 3 days to go, to agree that the live music element could be removed to save the fun run and dog show. This led to additional costs, a loss of reputation for the festival committee and disappointment from those due to perform and those planning to listen to them.

In the end it was a successful event appreciated by all those who attended but it came at the end of a very stressful week.”

The Mayor re-iterated that the dog show and colour fun run had been very popular. She said she and the Clerk would be writing to FDC’s Chief Executive about the SAG group’s efforts to de-rail the Festival.

## **65) Doddington Road Speed Limit Petition**

Members had received a copy of the letter which accompanied the petition calling for a 30mph speed limit along Doddington Road and Curf and Willey Terraces. The letter outlined the problems the residents had spoken about earlier in the meeting. It also gave details of other accidents and suggestions for possible speed reduction measures.

Members agreed there was overwhelming evidence that the reduction in the speed limit was needed and agreed the scheme should be put forward for LHI funding as it was the number one priority in the town.

They agreed the speed limit should be reduced from Carters Bridge and should then be Reduced to 30mph ahead of Curf and Willey Terrace. Ideas for measures to reduce the speed of vehicles were discussed. It was agreed speed humps were not suitable due to the number of lorries forced to use the road. However the idea of priority lane build-outs were favoured and the Clerk was asked to obtain a price for such a scheme. If insufficient funds were available

through the LHI scheme it was suggested the Town Council could put funds into the scheme using reserves set aside for traffic schemes and there might be the chance of obtaining funding from the Womb Farm development. Cllr Haggata stressed the need for the footpath to be extended along Fenland Way from Jacks to the Slade End roundabout to enable children from the Doddington Road area to safely access the town and schools using the underpass. He was assured this should be one of the conditions of the Womb Farm development permission.

#### 66) Traffic Issues

Safety Improvements: Notification had been received that Cambridgeshire Highways would be carrying out road safety improvements to the A142 between Ely and Chatteris from Monday 26<sup>th</sup> July to Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> August 2021. Works would include improvements to road markings and traffic signing. To allow work to be completed safely and efficiently the road would be closed to all traffic between the hours of 20.00 and 06.00 each night (weekdays only). The work would be split into two sections Ely to Witcham Toll (2-3 nights) and Witcham Toll to Chatteris (3-4 nights). There would be signed diversion routes (one was particularly long) but access would be maintained to properties and businesses. Timings and dates were weather dependent.

Roadworks: The latest bulletins listing events affecting the highway had been received along with the IHMC reports for May and June.

#### 67) Correspondence

Members had a list of correspondence received since the last meeting (**copy attached**). Cllr Gowler had been contacted again by the resident hoping to open a snooker hall in the town but members were still unable to put forward ideas for suitable premises.

#### 68) Reports

There were no reports.

#### 69) Items for the Next Agenda

No items were put forward for the next agenda.