

**CHATTERIS TOWN COUNCIL
LEISURE AND GENERAL PURPOSES WORKING GROUP**

**Minutes of a meeting held at the Council Chambers and via Zoom on
Tuesday 19th April 2022**

Present: Cllrs J Smith (Chairman), L Ashley, A Charrier and A Hay. Cllr Newell joined via Zoom.

L81 21/22 Apologies for Absence

Cllrs J Carney and W Haggata sent apologies for absence.

L82 21/22 FDC Update

Mr Simon Bell, FDC open spaces manager, had reported that tenders were out to renew the play equipment at Cricketers Way. Larham Way play area was now open and a new fence for the northern perimeter to separate the grass from the fire damaged house was on order. FDC would also be tidying up the basketball court. Huntingdon Road play area was open and a quote to repaint the teen shelter had been requested.

All mowing was up to date and the cemeteries were OK despite a decrease in the standard of driving. Mr Bell said trees, signs and taps had all been hit.

Cllr Ashley was sceptical that the taps had been hit by a car and suggested criminal damage. It was agreed to ask if the gate was locked at nights and to suggest it should be as the area attracted drug dealing.

L83 21/22 Any Matters Arising from the Last Meeting of the Group

L75) Pond: The Clerk had put forward the pond at Whitemill as a possible restoration project and had met with a representative of FWAG East, Mr Raphael Long, to inspect the pond. He had concluded that the water was in very good condition and shading did not affect the pond. Unfortunately this meant the pond was not eligible for restoration. He said the pond just needed to be cleared of rubbish and the Willow tree in the centre cut back.

Since the pond belonged to Fenland District Council the Clerk had informed them of Mr Long's decision and they had then agreed to sort out the rubbish removal and schedule the tree to be cut back in the autumn.

Members welcomed the good news and suggested the scouts might be prepared to help look after the pond once the rubbish had been removed.

In the meantime Cllr Ashley's son had sent information about other ponds in Chatteris. It was agreed to send him the criteria for ponds which might be eligible for restoration and ask him to suggest which pond best met the criteria.

L70) Arts Project: The Clerk had received notification that this would now be going ahead on Saturday 30th April and she had agreed to deliver town guides for the bags ahead of that date and to ask if there were any posters advertising the event.

L76) Annual Town Meeting: The Clerk apologised that she had to bring forward the annual town meeting by one day to Thursday 28th April. This had been agreed by the Mayor. Cllr Hay spoke about the County Council report she would be giving.

Next Meeting: The Clerk reported that CCTV manager Mr Aarron Locks and Mr Dan Horn, of FDC, would be attending the next Leisure and General Purposes Working Group meeting on the 17th May to discuss CCTV coverage in the town. Mr Locks had asked to be notified in advance of any questions from councillors which required a detailed response, especially if data based. Cllr Smith emphasised the need to give details of specific incidences, which it was believed were not captured by the cameras, such as the ram raid at Nisa and criminal damage at Jubilee Gardens. All councillors would be invited to put forward questions and to attend the leisure meeting.

L84 21/22 Little Acre Fen Pocket Park & Old Railway Line Updates

The Clerk said she had agreed to meet the gentleman who had been planting trees along the Old Railway Line on the 22nd April to see the progress he had made and his plans for the future.

The Clerk had details of plaques created by the Royal British Legion which could be used to commemorate the Queen's Green Canopy Planting. It was agreed such a plaque would look good at the area planted by the cubs and members of FLAPP and it was agreed to put the idea to the full council.

Cllr Smith was cross that the planned walk along the Old Railway Line on the 8th May was now unlikely to go ahead because it had not been possible to arrange a meeting with the representative from the Somersham Nature Reserve, despite many attempts at chasing him by the Clerk and a representative of Think Communities. It was agreed it was now too late to organise transport, details of the walk and to advertise it and the Clerk was instructed to inform the Nature Reserve representative and Think Communities that Chatteris councillors were no longer interested in the idea for the 8th May but might reconsider it at a later date.

L85 21/22 Entrance Signs

Cllr Carney had informed the Clerk that he was gathering evidence to fight his case following the Highways Officer's rejection of his designs for new entrance signs on the premise that they were too wordy.

L86 21/22 FACT Bus Service Ideas

Cllr Charrier had put forward her ideas for possible new FACT bus services. In particular she was keen to see a direct bus service to Cambridge, as many people were put off by the length of time it took using the current bus service.

She suggested it would be good to increase links between the two towns and people might be interested in going to Cambridge for such events as the Strawberry Fair, the Midsummer Fair, Pride and the North Pole and for leisure activities including the ice skating rink, swimming, punting, lamas land and shopping. The service would need to be pushed through social media including Facebook, Instagram and Twitter - perhaps its own Facebook page - and Cllr Charrier offered to “get noisy” about the service. Cllr Charrier suggested giving more information about the buses – their accessibility, etc. She also put forward the idea of making online payments for the service via a link rather than ringing up to book.

Cllr Charrier’s other ideas for destinations were Kings Lynn (to allow access to the coast) or Wisbech.

Councillors favoured a bus to Cambridge and the Clerk said she would enquire if it was possible to book online even if you couldn’t pay online. The ideas put forward by Cllr Charrier would be raised with FACT.

L87 21/22 Any Other Business

Fair: FDC Street Scene Leader Ms Layna Warren had sent notification that the spring fair would arrive in Chatteris on the 1st May and would open to the public at Wenny Recreation Ground on the 5th, 6th and 7th May.

Invite: An invitation had been received to register for online sessions to hear the views of town and parish councillors on the local environment at an event organised by the Food, Farming and Countryside Commission.

Skatepark: There had been posts on social media about problems at the skatepark at Wenny with older children picking on youngsters and swearing. While not condoning the language or behaviour, the Clerk pointed out that skatepark had been designed for older children leaving the skatepark at Huntingdon Road for younger children.

L88 21/22 Date of Next Meeting

Tuesday 17th May 2022.