

CHATTERIS TOWN COUNCIL
LEISURE AND GENERAL PURPOSES WORKING GROUP

Minutes of a meeting held at the Council Chambers, 14 Church Lane, Chatteris, on Tuesday 17th September 2024

Present: Cllrs A Hay (Mayor), V Joyce (Chairman of group), L Ashley, I Benney, A Gowler, A Jones (formerly Charrier), S Selman and S Unwin.

L19 24/25 Apologies for Absence

An apology for absence had been received from Cllr Siggee.

L20 24/25 Meeting with Representatives of George Clare Surgery

Doctors Shirin Howell and Kimberley Gabbitas, Practice Manager Ms Melissa Morley and Chairman of the Patients Participation Group Mr Ron Hodson were all welcomed to the meeting by the Mayor.

Councillors had provided a list of questions for the doctors and they had in turn sent out a list of topics they wished to cover. Among the questions under discussion were the staffing of the surgery, the ability of the practice to grow to accommodate patients from the proposed development in the town, remote GP appointments, receptionists' powers, queuing outside the surgery, blood test results and the possibility of re-positioning of the mammogram unit.

Ms Morley said the surgery had to be accessible so appointments could be made on-line, over the telephone or face to face. Receptionists were being trained to signpost patients to the correct person.

She assured members that the surgery was fully staffed to deal with the number of patients on the books. A replacement had already been found for a retiring GP and an additional nurse practitioner had been appointed. She admitted space was at a premium but said with more patients there would be more funding. The Clerk had earlier shown the representatives the new community rooms at the Council Chambers, which were available to the surgery, if needed, for small meetings, consultations, etc. Cllr Benney said the NHS was now asking for funding to help provide extra space at doctors' surgeries whenever it was consulted about new developments and he was requesting Section 106 payments to help the surgery.

Ms Morley said telephone and video appointments with a remote GP worked well. She felt the benefits of losing a few parking spaces for two weeks of the year so the mammogram unit could be parked there, outweighed the temporary loss of parking spaces; this was agreed.

Members were encouraged to send a representative to the Patients Participation Group, which welcomed queries from patients.

Ms Morley said a new appointments system was due to be introduced at the beginning of October with the aim of meeting demand, reducing queuing, signposting patients to the best

person first time and also providing safe working for staff. There would be more pre-bookable appointments.

The Mayor thanked the representatives for attending the meeting which had been very informative. (The representatives and Cllrs Benney and Gowler left the meeting and Cllr Joyce took over chairing the meeting).

L21 24/25 Matters Arising from the Last Meeting of the Group

L13) Town Guide: The local printers were now busy working on a draft of the Town Guide having been given the go ahead. They had been in contact with Cllr Selman. Unfortunately, Community Payback could not help with distribution of the guide but Cllr Ashley suggested approaching the Army Cadets for help in return for a donation to funds.

L17) Mural: The Clerk had agreed to the price for the mural and was now waiting for a design so she could pass it to FDC for approval.

L17) Place Partnership Fund: An update had been received to the effect that an Expression of Interest in the Art Council England's Place Partnership Fund programme had been due to be submitted by the Fenland team by the beginning of August, with a full application to be completed by the end of 2024 and a decision anticipated in Spring 2025. In the meantime MarketPlace had organised 15 weeks of workshops in Chatteris, Whittlesey and Wisbech which were free to attend. Cllr Ashley said in Chatteris they were being held at the King Edward Centre and were well attended, attracting more than 30 people.

L22 24/25 Little Acre Fen Pocket Park & Old Railway Line Updates

The Clerk said following the Council's approval, she had requested the contractors cut the Old Railway Line footpath and bridleway from the entrance to the pocket park to the Somersham border. The Pocket Park was looking good thanks to the work of FLAPP, especially new volunteer Spike. Community Payback had confirmed they could supply a new picnic bench for the park and FLAPP were looking to apply to Tesco's for the cost of the concrete base and installation of the bench. Cllr Unwin asked if Community Payback could provide a new seat for the land at the Old Auction Yard in the High Street.

The Clerk agreed to contact a resident who had a number of trees in pots which should be suitable for the Pocket Park.

Members were very impressed by the carved, marble memorial stones which had been created by Carl at Chatteris Independent Funeral Directors. The stones would be installed next to Florence Newell and Rosemary Stimson's memorial trees in the pocket park. Carl had very kindly donated his time and the marble. He had suggested a donation for the East Anglian Air Ambulance to show the Council's appreciation and it was **agreed** to make a donation of £100.

The Clerk said she would be inviting Florence and Rosemary's families to an unveiling ceremony once the memorial stones had been installed.

L23 24/25 Defibrillators

The Clerk was in a position to order the new defibrillator but said the telephone box needed to be decorated/repaired first. Cllr Joyce very kindly agreed to carry out the work.

L24 24/25 Lampposts at 14 Church Lanes

The Clerk explained that the lettering on the lampposts outside the Council Chambers was now out of date as it read Chatteris Town Council & Museum. Before the lampposts were re-decorated, she suggested the sign should be changed and the lamps either sealed or replaced to make them water tight. She said she had spoken to a lecturer at the new training centre who had stated they had the means to alter the sign if the Council could pay for the materials. It was agreed she should make further enquiries about what was possible.

L25 24/25 Splash Pad Possibility

Cllr Unwin had asked for the item to go on the agenda. She suggested a splash pad would be very popular at Wenny Recreation Ground as children loved water. Such a pad was being installed in Wisbech. Cllr Ashley was concerned it would be abused and there were concerns it would be expensive to maintain and insure. Cllr Unwin said she would look into the costs and asked if it could be added to the Council's Section 106 wish list. Cllr Selman suggested Cllr Unwin approach the reservoir development team to enquire if it could be part of their leisure facilities.

L26 24/25 Biodiversity

The Clerk said she had been informed by CAPALC that town and parish councils had a duty to consider what action to take for biodiversity. Having looked at the Model Biodiversity policy the Clerk said the Council was already meeting many of the aims and objectives thanks to the Pocket Park, the Old Railway Line and the Allotments, while Cllr Unwin said In Bloom had to meet biodiversity criteria. It was agreed the Clerk and Cllr Unwin should go through the model plan and draw up a biodiversity plan for the Town Council.

L27 24/25 Any Other Business

Attendance: Cllr Joyce asked for it to be minuted that all councillors were invited to the meeting with the George Clare Surgery representatives but Cllr Perrin refused to attend and posted comments on Facebook.

Sign: A member of the In Bloom committee had alerted the Clerk to the fact that the sign in the flower beds at the Parish Church (below the beacon) was showing clear signs of fire damage and asked if it could be replaced in time for In Bloom judging in 2025. The Clerk admitted the sign had been damaged when the beacon was lit and admitted it was the Town Council's responsibility to replace it.

L28 24/25 Date of Next Meeting: Tuesday 15th October 2024.

