

CHATTERIS TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes Dated 6th February 2018

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Minutes of a meeting of Chatteris Town Council held on Tuesday 6th February 2018 at the Council Chambers, 14 Church Lane, Chatteris.

Present: Cllr W Haggata (Mayor), Cllr J Carney (Deputy Mayor), Cllrs L Ashley, A Carney, A Hay, P Murphy, F Newell, K Patterson and J Smith.

205) Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence had been received from Cllrs J Burrow and I Taylor. Cllr Hay sent apologies that she would be a little late and arrived during item 6 (min 209).

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

Cllrs Hay, Murphy and Newell declared an interest in all planning matters as members of Fenland District Council's planning committee.

207) Open Forum

As there were no members of the public present it was agreed to move on to the next item on the agenda.

208) Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 9th January 2018 were agreed and signed by the Mayor as a correct record.

209) Police Matters

PCSOs Dawn Rae and James Cox were welcomed to the meeting. PCSO Cox said there had been 13 crimes recorded in Chatteris in January (from burglaries to criminal damage) but this was low compared to Wisbech and March. Investigations into the raid on Aldi which led to the theft of the ATM machine were continuing, as were patrols in the town.

Although youths were still congregating around the bus shelter in East Park Street and causing a nuisance, the numbers involved were low partly due to the work with youths carried out by the PCSOs and the anti-social behaviour orders which had been given out. There had been problems with equipment used by Virgin Media being stolen but most had been traced as they were equipped with trackers and they had usually only been moved a short distance. An Amazon van had also been taken as the keys had been left in it. The van had been recovered but not the parcels.

Vulnerable people at the Gables had been targeted by a carer who had stolen from them. The person responsible had been traced using CCTV, had appeared in court and had received an 18 month prison sentence.

PCSO Rae spoke about the results of a policing review which meant that Fenland police officers were joining with Peterborough and would work out of Thorpe Wood police station. The team would be able to respond instantly to issues but major crimes would take precedence and the number of major crimes in the city and larger towns was much higher than in Chatteris.

Councillors feared petty crimes would be ignored and Cllr Patterson pointed out crimes seen as petty often meant a great deal to local people and if they weren't investigated people would think they were being ignored. PCSO Cox said crimes should still be reported and would be allocated a crime number. Crimes involving vulnerable people, high danger or a pattern of crime would be investigated. The Mayor pointed out low level crime could develop into higher level crime. PCSO Rae said a decision on the future of PCSOs would be taken in May. The PCSOs were asked to report back the Town Council's disapproval of the new arrangements.

It was agreed the Clerk should write to the Police and Crime Commissioner and the Chief Constable expressing disapproval with the new operating system and stating the Council was very concerned that Chatteris would be left without police cover.

210) Matters Arising from the Minutes

Min 197) Pride in Fenland: It was agreed to nominate Major Norman Larke for the individual category in the Pride in Fenland Awards for his work in organising the very successful George Clare VC commemorations, which helped to put in Chatteris on the map. It was also agreed to nominate the Chatteris In Bloom team in the organisation/club category for achieving a Gold in the In Bloom competition despite having an uphill battle.

Min 172) Bollard: Highways officer Mr Les Middleton had confirmed the County Council would be able to fund a bollard for the walkway between New Road and Green Park in the new financial year. The Clerk said the walkway was still being used by vehicles and it was agreed to ask Mr Middleton to install the bollard as soon as possible.

211) FDC, Street Scene, Section 106 and CCTV Updates

Members had before them the latest FDC, CCTV, Street Scene and Section 106 Updates (**copy attached**).

Cllr A Carney said the problem with dogs fouling at Saddlers Way appeared to have improved following enforcement action. Cllr Patterson asked for King Edwards Road to be added to the list of areas to be patrolled.

Councillors asked if the money listed in the Section 106 update for improvements to Larham Way Play area had actually been spent. Cllr Murphy agreed to enquire and to ask if money in danger of being clawed back had been spent on the Wenny Recreation Ground CCTV camera.

212) Financial Officer's Report

Financial Statement

Members had before them a budgetary control statement for the Revenue (Precept) Account as at 24th January 2018 showing expenditure of £214,256.41 and income of £239,402.96 (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.

Gardener

Members were advised that the Gardener retires on 28th February 2018. The Financial Officer requested approval for a leaving gift to be paid for from the gardeners payroll budget as there would be an underspend showing at the end of the financial year.

The Financial Officer proposed a Wyevale Garden Centre voucher of £100, a box of chocolates and a bottle of wine total cost £120.

Members agreed that the Gardener should have a decent leaving present as he had always provided the Town Council with a dedicated, personal and professional service and they wanted to thank him for his time at Chatteris Town Council.

All were in favour and it was **RESOLVED** that the report be noted and approved.

Members were also advised that interviews for a new gardener would take place on the 8th February. There were four candidates and all were contractors. They would not be employed directly by the Council but would invoice for the work completed. It was agreed whoever was appointed should be employed for a probationary period of three or four months.

It was also agreed that, as the Council would no longer have a need for the gardening equipment it owned, the equipment should be valued and sold as a package to the contractor.

213) Payment of Accounts

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

Financial Officer	Payroll February 2018	1,007.66
Town Clerk	Payroll February 2018	1,468.05
Gardener	Payroll February 2018	260.45
HMRC	Payroll February 2018	685.39
Cambs Pension	Payroll February 2018	1,307.72
Zen Internet	Monthly Website fee	10.79

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Wave	Water Bill Council Offices	67.31
Wave	Allotments Q Water Bill RHSOF	86.21
Wave	Allotments Q Water Bill LHSOF	102.38
Barclays	Bank Charges	8.72
R J Warren Ltd	Furrowfields picnic table base	1,026.00
Alphabets Letting Agency	Credit paid into Town Council account in error, Reimbursement of payment received.	352.50
Clerk	Mileage reimbursement LHI & Fact meetings	18.00
Chatteris Museum	Vol Grant purchase of Noticeboard	260.00
King Edward Centre	Page in Centrepont 2018	850.00
Kingfishers Swimming Club	Voluntary Grant	400.00
Ethos (Walters)	Additional printing above lease contract	74.24
Total		£7,985.42

(214) Financial Review

Members had before them a report from the Financial Officer, the purpose of which was to review the Council's financial activities, as required to be undertaken annually under the Financial Regulations, in preparation for the 2017/18 audit. **(A full copy of the report is attached to these minutes)**

Members noted that Financial Regulations for the Council had first been approved in August 2002. They had been reviewed at the February 2012 meeting and revised regulations published.

The Financial Officer advised Members that she was in the process of revising the Financial Regulations again which when completed would go to full council for approval and publication.

Included in the Financial Officer's report were appendices containing the Council's Risk Management Policy (Appendix A), Assets Register (Appendix B), Internal Controls (Appendix C) and Investments Register (Appendix D). Members were informed that Internal Controls (Appendix C) had been revised due to Council approval of payment by BACS, the revised document was included with the financial review documents for approval by Members at February 2017 meeting.

Members were informed that the Council's insurance arrangements were reviewed on the 7th March 2017 (Minute 233). The Financial Officer obtained a best value quotation from Zurich Municipal accepted for three years from the 1st April 2017 - 31st March 2020. The detailed terms for renewal from the 1st April 2017 were attached to the report

Cllr Murphy asked why the smaller assets of the Town Council were not listed in the assets register. The Financial Officer advised Members that the value of assets were not contained

in the accounts balance sheet, and that they were just listed as a Memorandum item in the supporting information. Members agreed that despite this they were in favour of all the Town Council assets being listed in the assets register. This would include the gas lamps and picnic benches.

The Financial Officer confirmed she would list all the Town Council assets for Members information and would produce a revised assets register for approval at the next council meeting.

Members were reminded that although an annual review of effectiveness of internal audit was no longer required, it was still necessary to re-appoint an Internal Auditor annually and it was recommended that the current Auditor, Mark Saunders, be offered re-engagement for the 2018/19 audit.

Members were reminded that at the April 2017 Council meeting the Financial Officer advised Members that the FSCS only protected funds up to £85,000 per investment/savings. Members were concerned that the limit of protection was only £85,000 therefore instructed the Financial Officer to look into splitting the £160,000 between Lloyds and another high street bank/building society to ensure that the majority /all the investment money was covered under the FSCS scheme. This was approved by Members at (Minute No 256). Due to the critical time scale the Financial Officer obtained email Members approval to reinvest the £160,000 by splitting it between Lloyds Bank and Nationwide Building Society. Members were advised at the 6th June 2017 Council meeting that £85,000 was re-invested with Lloyds on the 19th May 2017 fixed for 1 year with an interest rate 0.80% and the remainder of £75,000 was invested with the Nationwide Building Society fixed for one year with an interest rate of 0.65%. Members approved the reinvestment split at Minute 34 item 2. A risk assessment was undertaken during the year for use of the King Edward Centre for Summer Fun activities.

It was **RESOLVED** that:-

- [i] the Council's Risk Management Policy (Appendix A) be approved;
- [ii] the revised Register of Assets (Appendix B) to be approved at March's Council meeting.
- [iii] the revised Internal Controls (Appendix C) be approved;
- [iv] Mark Saunders be offered re-engagement as Internal Auditor in 2018/19;
- [v] the Register of Investments (Appendix D) be approved.

215) Planning

Cllr Ashley (chairman) presented the minutes of the Planning Working Group meeting held on 30th January 2018 (**copy attached**).

The group made recommendations on planning applications a) to l) (as shown on the appended list) and these were ratified by the full council. Cllr Patterson did not agree with g) but councillors agreed by a majority vote to support the application.

Members considered a further six applications and it was agreed to return applications a) to q) to Fenland District Council marked as follows:

- a) Support
- b) Councillors are not opposed to the development of the land but are opposed to the design of the dwellings which are out of keeping with the area. Councillors wish to see a design that is more sympathetic to the street scene, which includes cottages and is one of the oldest parts of Chatteris. It is an entrance to the town and should be an asset to the town. Councillors cited the new development at the top of Angoods Lane as an example of good architecture which is sympathetic to the street scene and helps to make the entrance to town more enticing. They suggest dormers in the roofline and some form of design to break up the mass of the front of the building would help to add character.
- c) Support
- d) Support
- e) Support
- f) Support
- g) Support
- h) Support works but would not agree to felling.
- i) Support
- j) Support
- k) Councillors and the Clerk have personal knowledge that tennis has been played on the grass courts for at least 70 years. There are also historical records for St Peters Tennis Club going back many years. Councillors support the plan.
- l) Support
- m) Support
- n) Support
- o) Support
- p) Support
- q) Support, request that the old stones on the site which have clearly been preserved in the past are retained. Also request that the bricks compliment Coach House Court not Hereward Court.

It was agreed to defer making a decision on r) until further information could be gleaned.

216) Application to Register a Footpath

County Council Definitive Map Officer Mr Tom Ruzala had requested additional information to support the application to register the footpath from Wenny Road to The Elms.

Mr Ruzsala said the original application made in December 2011 was accompanied by 12 user evidence forms and he had sent the names of those who had completed the forms and a copy of the form if any other users could be identified.

The Clerk explained that at least one of the original users was now sadly deceased and it was, therefore, advisable to obtain more completed forms. Several councillors took copies of the form and agreed to ask users to complete them.

217) New Community Bus Service Update

Members had received a copy of the following report:

Questionnaire

Over 200 replies were received to the questionnaire about a new regular, direct bus service for Chatteris to be run by FACT using funds donated by Tesco's.

The vast majority of replies were from students at Cromwell Community College, thanks to a concerted effort by Cllr Ashley.

All the replies were collated and analysed by the Mayor, Cllr Carney and the Clerk and revealed the results which were on an attached sheet. (Cambridge was the most popular destination with Ely and Huntingdon second and the most popular day to travel was a Saturday).

FACT

On the 24th January the Mayor, Cllr Ashley and the Clerk attended a meeting with representatives of FACT to present the questionnaire findings and to discuss the way forward. It was clear that FACT were not prepared to run a bus to Cambridge but they were willing to run a bus to Ely Leisure Village and the railway station/Tesco's so there would be the opportunity to catch a train to Cambridge. They were willing to run the bus weekly on a Saturday and possibly on the occasional Bank Holiday, if there were events on in Ely. The bus could pick up passengers in Wimblington (near Knowles depot), Doddington (at the Clock Tower) and in Chatteris (at Furrowfields car park). The cost of a single journey would be £1.

The service would be available to those aged 14 years upwards. Anyone aged under 14 would have to be accompanied by an adult aged 18 upwards.

It was agreed the first bus should leave at 2pm and return at 5pm and the second could leave at 4pm and return at 10pm (although FACT expressed concerns about whether they would be able to find drivers for the late return). This would give young people the opportunity to swim or take part in activities at the leisure centre or attend the cinema and enjoy a bite to eat at the leisure village.

Ms Jo Philpott explained FACT operated 15 seater mini buses so passengers would be required to book on to a bus to ensure they had a seat. Various ideas for a booking system were discussed. Ms Philpott also suggested it would be advisable to review the scheme after a few weeks to decide if it was operating to maximum capacity.

Ms Philpott's main concern was what would happen if a youth did not turn up for the return bus. She said FACT's drivers would not be happy to leave without the youth and she feared bad publicity if a youth was left in Ely.

It was agreed that youths should register for the scheme and parents should be required to complete a disclaimer saying they would be responsible for their children if they failed to catch the return bus. Bus drivers should be furnished with the disclaimer and telephone numbers for the youth and their parents/guardians.

Next Step

It was agreed the Council would try and arrange a meeting with the Principal of Cromwell Community College to discuss ideas for a disclaimer.

The Mayor asked Ms Philpott to furnish the Council with a ballpark figure on how long the funds held by FACT (believed to be £54,000) would last for a service running twice on a Saturday every week.

Update

Mrs Jackie MacMahon, PA to the Principal at Cromwell, had kindly provided the wording for a suitable disclaimer to be completed by the parents/guardians of all youths planning to use the bus service.

It was agreed that the Clerk should now go back to Ms Philpott and request another meeting to discuss how the booking system would work.

218) Decision on Future of Youth Club

Members were asked to consider the following report:

Background

Members will be aware that the Town Council has been responsible for - originally partly and now wholly - funding the Youth Club for 10 to 13 year olds which is held fortnightly at the King Edward Centre.

For the past two years the Youth Club has been run by Young People March and the Town Council made provision in its 2018/19 budget to fund the Youth Club for another year.

Unfortunately the Council has received a letter advising them that Young People March are not able to run the Youth Club after the end of March due to staffing issues.

The Youth Manager at YPM has kindly set out details of the Youth Club, including attendance figures, in an e-mail.

Decision

Based on the information and attendance figures the Town Council must decide whether:

- a) It wishes to see the Youth Club continue and the Clerk and Financial Officer actively seek out an individual or an organisation willing to run the service. (Officers have a couple of ideas of possible operators and could seek suggestions from other councils).
- OR
- b) A decision is taken to close the Youth Club.

Councillors were concerned that numbers attending the youth club had fallen in recent months but Cllr Patterson believed new children had joined the club and argued that new providers were likely to be more enthusiastic and would hopefully attract more youngsters.

Councillors **agreed** to option a) and the Clerk and Financial Officer were asked to find someone new to run the youth club.

219) Leisure and General Purposes Working Group Report & Recommendations

Cllr Smith (Chairman) presented the minutes of the Leisure and General Purposes Working Group meeting held on Tuesday 16th January 2018 (**copy attached**).

L60, the Town Plan: Cllr Smith said the group would continue to look at every recommendation in the plan and make suggestions about how the action points could be delivered.

L59) FDC Update: The Mayor reported that the bin outside Chilli Masters was in a disgraceful state and let down the shop. It was agreed to request a new bin from FDC. Cllr Smith said the drains were smelling again in the High Street as they were full of leaves.

220) Gas Lamps Planters

Following a meeting between the Mayor and representatives of Stainless Metalcraft, a design for planters which would compliment the gas lamps had been agreed upon and models of the planters had been created by apprentices who would be working on the scheme. Members were shown a photograph of the models and agreed the design would compliment the gas lamps. They were keen to see some wording on the planters which would be created in aluminium and would need to be bolted to the ground to ensure they could not be stolen.

221) New General Data Protection Regulations

Substantial amounts of information was continually being received with regards to the new GDPR which came into place in May. Both the Clerk and the Financial Officer had received training on the subject but just what would be required to comply was still unclear. In addition there had been conflicting advice from NALC, SLCC and LCPAS on whether a data protection officer should be an external or an internal appointment. There was also a suggestion that councillors should have a .gov.uk email address for council emails to protect their personal email addresses.

The Financial Officer said she would be looking at templates and the regulations and would then work with the Clerk on compliance with the regulations.

Cllr Murphy suggested seeking the advice of Mrs Carol Pilson at FDC.

222) Community Literacy Project

Information had been received about a new project to help children develop strong language and literacy skills in their early years. Chatteris was one of the communities which had been chosen to receive funding for the project from the County Council.

A follow up email said the project leaders would be visiting the communities involved in the coming weeks to learn about communities and to hear about ideas for working together. The Clerk said when the project had been mentioned the Council had been asked for a representative, Cllr Ashley had been suggested.

223) Traffic Issues

Disabled Parking Bay: The Town Council had been asked if it had any objections to a County Council proposal to introduce a disabled parking bay in the vicinity of 19 Burnsfield Street. Councillors confirmed they had no objections.

Postponed: Works on the Mepal Viaduct Bridge had been re-scheduled to begin on the 5th February but had been postponed again due to the forecast of freezing overnight temperatures.

Road Closures: The Council had been consulted on the application to close roads for the Midsummer Festival parade.

Bulletin: The latest road works bulletins had been received.

Roadwatch: Roadwatch had noted the Town Council's decision not to proceed with the SIDs being supplied by Roadwatch and gave details of SIDs which were available to purchase.

224) Correspondence

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

225) Reports

Road Safety: Cllrs had received a very comprehensive report of the meeting Cllr Smith had attended to discuss the findings of the road safety route study of the A142 Ely to Chatteris road. Although there were various recommendations funding was a major issue.

Bus Shelter: Cllr J Carney said the Royal British Legion youth section were planning to repaint the bus shelter in East Park Street to mark the end of World War I. Councillors agreed they had no objections to the plans.

Speed Limits: Cllr Carney also reported there had been a call for a 30mph speed zone in Doddington Road and Cllr Newell said there had been a call for the 50mph zone in London Road to be reduced to 40mph. The Clerk reminded members that LHI funding for speed indicators in Doddington Road had been agreed and numerous calls in the past for a 40mph zone in London Road had fallen on deaf ears.

226) Items for the Next Agenda

No items were put forward for the next agenda.