

CHATTERIS TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes Dated 2nd May 2017

1680

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Minutes of the annual meeting of Chatteris Town Council held on Tuesday 2nd May 2017 at the Council Chambers, 14 Church Lane, Chatteris.

Present: Councillors L Ashley, J Burrow, W Haggata, A Hay, P Murphy, F Newell, J Smith and I Taylor.

1) Election of Mayor

Cllr Ashley proposed Cllr Haggata be re-elected as Mayor, seconded by Cllr Burrow and agreed by all.

Cllr Haggata said it had been a privilege to serve as Mayor for the past year and he appreciated the Council's confidence in allowing him to go forward for another year.

2) Mayor's Declaration of Acceptance of Office

The Mayor signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

3) Election of Deputy Mayor

Cllr Burrow proposed Cllr J Carney be re-elected Deputy Mayor, seconded by Cllr Hay and agreed by all.

4) Declarations of Interest & Dispensations to Speak and Vote on Declarable Pecuniary Interests

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

The Clerk reminded members of the need to keep their Register of Members' Interests forms up to date and to inform her if there were any changes.

5) To Accept Apologies for Absence

Cllrs A and J Carney and L Patterson had sent apologies for absence.

6) Appointments to Outside Bodies

Members had before them a list of groups and the Councillors who represented the Council on those groups. The Clerk asked members to confirm they were happy to continue to represent the Council and made amendments as advised. The revised list was agreed as follows:

King Edward Centre – Cllrs Ashley and Newell
Safer Fenland CCTV Partner Liaison – Cllrs Carney and Smith, Mr Richard Cross
All Weather Pitch Management Committee – Cllr Newell
Town Plan Working Group – Cllrs Burrow and Carney (Cllr Haggata offered to deputise if Cllr Burrow found he was unable to attend)
Sport Chatteris – Cllrs Ashley and Newell
Red Tile Wind Farm Trust – Cllr Hay
Chatteris In Bloom and Street Pride – Cllrs Murphy and Smith
Neighbourhood Watch – Cllr Taylor
Isle of Ely Blind Society – Cllr Murphy
Museum Trust – Cllrs Ashley, Haggata and Newell
George Clare Patients Alliance – Cllrs Murphy and Newell
Midsummer Festival – Cllrs Carney and Newell
Transport Committee – Cllrs Haggata and Newell
Feoffee Charity – Cllrs Murphy and Newell
Metalcraft Charity Fund – Cllr Hay
George Clare Commemorations – Cllrs A Carney and K Patterson

Cllr Newell said Sport Chatteris and the George Clare Patients Alliance were currently not meeting but she was looking into re-launching both groups.

7) Election of Working Groups

Members said they were willing to serve on the working groups as follows:

Leisure and General Purposes: Cllrs Ashley, Burrow, J Carney, Haggata, Hay, Newell and Smith.

Planning: Cllrs Ashley, J Carney, Haggata, Murphy, Newell, Smith and Taylor.

8) To Approve the Mayor's Allowance

Members considered approving the Mayor's Allowance for 2016/17 as shown in the budget. It was **resolved** that an allowance of up to £1,550 be paid to the Mayor in respect of expenses incurred in the performance of official duties under the scheme approved by the Council on 11th January 2011 and in accordance with HM Revenue and Customs Regulations.

9) Open Forum

Three representatives of Virgin Media were present to speak about a project to bring fibre optic broadband directly to homes in Chatteris. Regional Community and Wayleave Manager Mr Nev Andrews said the plan was to start the work in July/August time and complete it in December. Similar work in March was now complete and Wimblington and Doddington were about to be connected.

Mr Andrews explained that Virgin would be working in small areas at a time with the aim of causing as little disruption as possible. They had learned lessons from working in March and would be carrying out letter drops to warn residents when they would begin work. In addition they would be holding a community event when the plans would be unveiled and the schedule of works would be available to go on the council's website. Any wayleave issues would be dealt with and the company had to abide by re-instatement rules. Mr Andrews assured the Mayor that there would be a single point of contact who would be available if any issues arose.

The representatives were thanked for attending.

10) Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 4th April 2017 were agreed and signed by the Mayor as a correct record.

11) Matters Arising from the Minutes

Min 253) Additional Bin: Cllr Hay said she had been approached by residents of Wimpole Street requesting a bin near the bench at the entrance to Lyons Court as people gathered there and dropped litter.

12) Police Matters

PCSO Dawn Rae and PCSO Glenn Macloud were welcomed to the meeting. PCSO Rae said PCSO Macloud was a new recruit and she was busy training him. James his predecessor had moved to March to work. PCSO Rae assured members that when required a team of PCSO's and officers would attend an incident in Chatteris, there had been such an incident the previous Thursday at Lyons Court.

Thefts: Seven burglaries had been reported in Chatteris the previous month, three of them from sheds and the others from houses which had been unoccupied for a period of time. Aldi had suffered three shopliftings, all offenders had been identified and dealt with.

PCSO Rae warned that white vans were being targeted in the Fens (two in Chatteris), side windows were smashed and tools stolen. One witness got a partial number plate. PCSO Rae advised marking all tools with a permanent marker as this made it difficult to sell the tools on. The Mayor pointed out the loss of tools resulted in a loss of work and income.

Cars: Traffic police were operating in Chatteris in unmarked cars at night attempting to catch boy racers, said PCSO Rae. On one occasion they threw tools at a police car in pursuit.

Benches: PCSO Rae said benches along the Old Railway Line footpath had been damaged and a vehicle then became stuck in the gate but by the time the police arrived it had gone. Cllr Ashley said the registration number had been taken.

Handbags: Three handbags had been stolen in town, two suspects had been arrested and a statement from the Vicar was awaited regarding the third culprit. PCSO Rae said there had been a problem with the CCTV camera in Church Lane on the occasion of the second theft.

Trolleys: PCSO Rae then moved on to the two major crimes in Chatteris the previous week. On the Wednesday evening most of the trolleys outside Aldi's and Budgens were stolen. PCSO Rae said the offenders turned up with a massive van and wore high viz vests so they looked official as they loaded up the vans.

ATM Attempted Theft: On the Tuesday night an attempt was made to steal the cash machine from the Post Office in the High Street. A stolen digger took out the front of the shop and was about to load the cash machine onto a low loader when the hydraulic fuel pipe burst and the digger stopped working. The offenders fled the scene in a stolen Audi leaving the ATM machine lying on the pavement intact and the digger and low loader blocking the High Street. There had been other similar thefts elsewhere and Cambridgeshire CID were working with Suffolk police.

PCSO Rae said it had been suggested that a metal post should be erected in front of the Post Office when the new ATM machine was installed but this was apparently refused by Fenland District Council. PCSO Rae was assured the Town Council were not against the idea and Cllr Murphy said the owner was applying for a post again as he would not be allowed another ATM machine unless a post went in. He pointed out a precedent had already been set in the High Street because bollards had been erected outside Aspinall's shop.

Anti-Social Behaviour: PCSO Rae said there had been an issue with a house in Chapel Lane where teenagers were living on their own in the house. Social services were involved and the house had been emptied and locked up.

Problems had begun again with cars revving their engines in Furrowfields car park but the police were working with CCTV to try and resolve the issue.

One youth had had his car seized after he took his sister's car without consent, another car was scrapped for having no insurance. PCSO Rae said the police had a list of bad drivers.

Engagement: PCSO Rae said she had been regularly visiting Cromwell Community College but she was concerned that she had not had the opportunity to talk about the danger of drugs to students and to explain what would happen if they were caught with drugs. She said she would like the opportunity to do so.

PCSO Rae said engagements at Aldi had not worked as well as those at Budgens since many of the shoppers at Aldi did not live in Chatteris so the plan was to return to Budgens.

Cllr Taylor was concerned that his daughter, who lived in Burnsfield, had reported Anti-Social Behaviour by those living behind her in Treeway but the police had not helped. PCSO Rae explained the police did not deal with loud music; that was the responsibility of Fenland District Council if it was after 11pm. Unless someone was threatened or there was underage drinking complainants should contact FDC not the police.

PCSO Rae assured members that although there was a long report this month it was just a blip and Chatteris still had less crime than the other Fenland towns. She and PCSO Macloud were thanked for attending.

Report: The Clerk had compiled an update on information received from the police in the past month (**copy attached**).

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

Members had received a copy of all the updates (**copy attached**).

The Mayor asked if the hedge along Juniper Drive from St Martin's Road was the responsibility of Fenland District Council as it was continually overgrown and contained brambles. Cllr Murphy agreed to investigate. Cllr Hay said there was a similar problem with the hedge on the corner of Haigh's Close and Clare Street.

Cllr Murphy said plans to improve the flower bed on the corner of Station Road and Station Street were being considered.

14) Annual Audit 2016/17 – Annual Governance Statement

Members had before them Appendix A which sets out the assurances that Members are required to attest to in Section 1 of the Annual Return, together with qualification of each section to enable the Council to provide the required assurance over the signatures of the Mayor and the Clerk.

This was to be considered and approved in advance of the Accounting Statements.

The paragraph numbers shown and the headings in bold corresponded to the individual parts of the Governance Statement contained in Section 1 of the Annual Return. **(A full copy of the Appendix and signed section 1 of the annual return is appended to these Minutes).**

It was **RESOLVED** that:-

[i] The Annual Governance Statement as detailed in **Appendix A** was considered and approved by the Members as a whole and section 1 of the Annual return was signed by the Mayor and the Clerk prior to the approval of the accounting statements.

15) Final Accounts and Annual Return

The Financial Officer presented a report, the purpose of which was to recommend approval of the Final Accounts for 2016/17 and to deal with the content of the Annual Return for the year 1st April 2016 to the 31st March 2017 due to be submitted to the External Auditors (Littlejohn) by the 12th June 2017. **(A full copy of the report is appended to these Minutes).**

As neither the total income nor the total expenditure for 2016/17 exceeded £200,000 the Council's accounts for 2016/17 should attract a 'Basic' audit. A detailed Statement of Accounts was shown at Appendix C to the report and the Financial Officer summarised the position.

The Reserves had increased to £160,357.93 through the addition of a revenue contribution of £2,000 to the CCTV Reserve, accrued investment interest for the year of £1,656.39 and deductions of £2,316.70 from the Town Plan fund for questionnaire leaflets printing and distribution expenditure.

The General Fund balance had increased by £13,285. The reasons for this were shown in Appendix B to the report, expressed as a comparison with the Budget 2016/17.

Also contained in the full report were the content of the Summary of Accounts required under Section 2 of the Annual Return (Appendix D), Section 2 requiring the signatures of the Financial Officer and the Mayor, and the year-end bank reconciliation (Appendix E).

Appendix A set out the assurances under the Annual Governance Statement that Members were required to attest to in Section 1 of the Annual Return, together with qualification of each section to enable the Council to provide the required assurance over the signatures of the Mayor and the Clerk before the approval of the annual accounts.

Members noted that the Internal Auditor's Report would be presented to the June meeting.

Cllr Murphy asked about the allowance for the night time street lighting and was assured the money had been transferred to a reserve fund.

It was **RESOLVED** that:-

- [i] the detailed accounts and analyses for 2016/17, as submitted, be approved
- [ii] the Summary of Accounts (Appendix D), to be certified by the Financial Officer and endorsed by the Mayor, be approved;
- [iii] the Annual Governance Statement as detailed in Appendix A be approved for signature by the Mayor and the Clerk as per Agenda & Min14.

16) Payment of Accounts

Payment of the following accounts was approved:-

		£
Financial Officer	Payroll May17	921.21
Town Clerk	Payroll May17	1,468.05
Gardener	Payroll May17	237.24
HMRC	Payroll May17	626.95
Cambs Pension	Payroll May17	1,259.58
Zen Internet	Monthly Website fee	9.59
Fran Orridge	Reimbursement Makeup fort Summer festival	37.66
Walters	Additional printing over and above photocopier lease	31.55
Chatteris Museum	Annual Grant	4,150.00
Chatteris Xmas Lights	Annual Grant	3,500.00
What Next Group	Grant payment to voluntary organisations	190.00
NCBC	Steve Barclay's Read to Succeed Campaign Grant	250.00
King Edward Centre	Annual Grant	6,500.00
Chatteris In Bloom	Annual Grant	1,950.00
Boogie B Castles	Deposit for adult disco bouncy castle Summer Festival	20.00
Total		21,151.83

17) To Consider Membership of CAPALC in 2017/18

The Clerk reminded members that the temporary 6 month membership of CAPALC was due to end and the Council had been invited to continue the membership for 2017/18 at a quoted price of £936.29. Members agreed this was expensive and discussed the possibility of negotiating the price. However Cllr Murphy was against taking up membership again and officer's admitted that although there had been numerous communications from CAPALC and NALC they had had little need to consult CAPALC about Council matters and it was difficult to justify the costs.

It was unanimously **agreed** not to renew the Council's membership of CAPALC in 2017/18. It was also agreed the possibility of joining LCPAS should be explored.

18) Tree Survey

The Clerk reported that the CGM Landscape Group had been asked to carry out a survey of all trees on land owned and managed by the Town Council. The Financial Officer said the Council's insurance policy stipulated that the Council should have a tree survey and carry out any necessary work to ensure the trees were safe. Cllr Murphy encouraged pollarding the trees rather than taking them down, if work was necessary.

19) Planning

Cllr Ashley presented the minutes of the Planning Working Group meeting held on Tuesday 25th April 2017 (**copy attached**).

Members made recommendations on planning applications a) to e) (as shown on the appended list). These were ratified and applications f) to h) were then considered and it was agreed to return all applications to Fenland District Council marked as follows:

- a) Support
- b) Support
- c) Councillors are seriously concerned about the contamination of the land. Whilst they welcome businesses into the town they query if it is the right site for a garden centre. Councillors are also worried that it appears that work has started on the land and the contamination may have been disturbed. Have FDC officers visited the site?
- d) Support
- e) Support
- f) Support
- g) Support but councillors do not like retrospective applications
- h) Support

20) Leisure & General Purposes Working Group Report & Recommendations

The Mayor presented the minutes of the Leisure and General Purposes Working Group meeting held on the 18th April 2017 (**copy attached**). Cllr Haggata commented that the group was looking at a rolling programme of projects.

L80) Skatepark Opening: The date of the official opening of the Wenny Recreation Ground skatepark had changed and Councillors had been invited to attend on the 14th June at 4pm. The Clerk said it would be good to invite along the Cromwell pupils who helped to design the skatepark. Cllr Ashley offered to approach Dr Pearson who was most likely to know the names of those responsible.

21) Chatteris Midsummer Festival

The Clerk reported that plans were well underway for the Midsummer Festival which would be held on the 24th and 25th June at Furrowfields Recreation Ground. One of the highlights promised to be live camels who would be joining the walking parade and on show at the recreation ground. There would also be an exotic animals encounter as the theme was Animals on Parade. Regular attractions returning would be the Party in the Park, the dog show, cream teas and Tug of War and Festival Wipeout competitions.

The Clerk requested help from Councillors over the weekend to man the entrance gate.

22) Traffic Issues

Stopping Up Order: Notification had been received from LGSS Law Ltd that an application had been made to stop up the Highway at 15 The Hawthorns, Chatteris. The letter stated the matter could not progress without the consent of town and district councils. The Clerk reminded members that the last time the matter had been discussed (in July 2016) the Town Council had resolved to make no recommendation but express disappointment at the failure by all parties to follow due diligence.

Members discussed the matter and agreed “to object to the application”. They pointed out the land was used as an overspill car park for residents of The Hawthorns and said they were reluctant to allow public parking space to go into private ownership. They said allowing the order would set a dangerous precedent and pointed out lack of parking space was a continual problem in the town.

Disabled Parking Bay: Notification had been received that the County Council was planning to introduce an advisory disabled persons parking bay in the vicinity of 26 Lindsells Walk. Members agreed to object to the proposal pointing out the road was too narrow, there were

already problems with parked cars in the area which would be exacerbated and the proposal would cause access difficulties for emergency vehicles.

TDP Schemes: Notification had been received of plans to carry out works to Boots Bridge, Manea Road, Wimblington, Cottons Corner Bridge on the Sixteen Foot Bank, Christchurch, and Mepal Viaduct.

Bus Service Changes: Notification had been received of a slight change to the times of the 35 bus service from Chatteris to St Ives and the Busway A service from Chatteris/Ramsey/Somersham to St Ives. The Mayor requested the Council write to Mr Andy Campbell at Stagecoach asking for the re-instatement of the hourly no.9 service from Chatteris to Cambridge. He said it was satisfying to know that Stagecoach had agreed that bus passes could be used on the 9.20am service.

Letter Re: Tithe Issues: Mrs Pam Joyce, Highways Officer, had forwarded an email from a resident of Tithe Road concerned about the lack of play equipment on the green, requesting waste bins and dog waste bins, requesting no parking signs on the green and complaining about a tree which had been felled and was lying across a footpath and ditch. The Clerk reminded members there had been football posts on the green which had been removed when they became unsafe. Cllr Newell said the ditch in question belonged to Roddons and the farmer. Members were also concerned that the recent re-surfacing work to Tithe Road had resulted in waste water drains being covered by the surfacing material.

It was agreed local councillors would look into the issues and report back.

23) Correspondence

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

Councillors noted correspondence between the County Councillor and NHS England about any future plans to provide a new GP surgery in Chatteris. The reply said Section 106 funding would be required from developers to help mitigate the impact on health. For the very biggest developments this might result in the need for a new GP surgery but in most cases resources were secured to expand provision within existing practices or to provide bigger facilities for existing practices to relocate to, and expand within. Councillors pointed out the development to the south of the town only provided space for a doctors' surgery not a surgery building.

24) Reports

CCTV: Cllr Smith had provided a written report on the CCTV Partner Liaison meeting held on the 20th April. Mr Aaron Locks had reported the migration of cameras to a wireless system was underway. The team had been looking into monitoring other public sector alarms, intruder equipment and cameras to create an income stream. It was reported the Service Level

Agreement was due for renewal in April 2018 and FDC would soon commence discussions with contributing partners to secure arrangements for 2018-2021.

The overall number of incidents in all four towns in the 2016/17 year was 2337 with 481 resulting in arrests or fixed penalty notices (in 2015/16 the figures were 2420 and 344).

The number of arrests and fixed penalty notices as a result of recorded CCTV incidents in Chatteris was low – single figures for all months. Patrols carried out by CCTV were generally exceeding the 500 target. CCTV helped with the handbag thefts in Chatteris and football being played in Furrowfields car park.

AWP: The Financial Officer reported she and the Clerk had attended another meeting about the All Weather Pitch with the Mr Jonathan Peryer, the College's financial director. The good news was that there appeared to be more enquiries about bookings, although summer bookings were still well below winter bookings. One problem was finding someone available to let the pitches after 4pm at weekends, when the gym closed. The college was considering different proposals for an on-line booking system. The Financial Officer and the Clerk found Mr Peryer far more accommodating, he asked their views on costs and letting proposals. Mr Ben Dunning, of the Football Foundation, had been in contact with the Financial Officer and assured her he would shortly be meeting with the college representatives about the AWP and would be monitoring lettings. In a bid to help the Clerk had written a short report for Centrepoint on hiring the pitches and she and the Financial Officer would be drawing up a poster to advertise they were available for birthday parties, etc.

25) Items for the Next Agenda

It was agreed to invite along a representative from the George Clare Doctors' Surgery to speak about how the surgery was coping with the ever increasing population and the scope for expanding the surgery.