

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

Minutes of a meeting held on Tuesday 24th January 2017

Present: Cllrs J Carney, F Newell, and J Smith.

L51 16/17 Apologies for Absence

Cllrs J Burrow (work commitments), A Hay (representing the Town Council at a Red Tile Wind Farm Trustee meeting) and W Haggata (recovering from an operation).

It was agreed that Cllr J Carney would take the chair in the absence of the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the group.

L52 16/17 Any Matters Arising from the Last Meeting of the Group

L45, Gym: The Clerk said she was still trying to get a date when Mrs Jane Horn, Principal of Cromwell Community College, could meet with Mr Bob Ollier to see the plans for the outdoor gym/exercise area.

L45, Bench: The Clerk was also trying to tie Mr Ollier down to a date when they could meet and decide upon the correct location for the bench.

L45, DJ Booth: Cllr Smith reminded members that Mr Ollier had promised to arrange a demonstration of the DJ booth.

L45, CCTV Camera: Cllr Carney said he had attended the latest CCTV partners' liaison group meeting and the CCTV manager had confirmed that the plan was for all CCTV cameras to be wireless as this would reduce running costs. It also meant the costs of installing a new camera at Wenny Recreation Ground would be less than those of installing a conventional camera (which would have been over £50,000).

L53 16/17 FDC Update

There was no FDC Update. The Clerk had been unable to contact Mr Ollier.

L54 16/17 Plans for the Annual Town Meeting

Cllr Carney said it would be possible to update the Powerpoint presentation given at the 2016 Annual Town Meeting to reflect what had been achieved over the year.

The Clerk said in 2016 Mr Ian Mason had been keen to give a presentation on the work of the museum and Mrs Kath Childs had also wished to speak about the Music Society. It was agreed they should be approached about speaking at the 2017 meeting.

Cllr Smith said Chatteris resident Mr Joe Perry had reached the final of the Masters Snooker Tournament and it had been suggested the town should recognise this achievement. It was

agreed Mr Perry should be invited to give a short talk at the annual town meeting and he should be presented with something to show the Council's appreciation of the fact that he had brought recognition to Chatteris.

It was also hoped the Town Plan team would be in a position to give an update since the questionnaires were due back by the 11th February.

L55 16/17 Letter of Response to FDC Business Plan Consultation

The Clerk reminded members that FDC had launched its annual draft Business Plan and Budget consultation and was seeking residents' views on how important services were to them. There was an online questionnaire and the Council had also been asked for views on the following questions:

“Do you think we are focusing on the most important areas?”

“How could we deliver the above priorities more effectively?” &

“Are there any areas that we perform particularly well in, or could be improved?”

FDC's Corporate Priorities were as follows:

‘Communities: Support vulnerable members of our community. Support our ageing population and young people. Promote health and wellbeing

Environment: Deliver a high performing refuse, recycling and street cleansing service. Work with partners and the community on projects that improve the environment and our streetscene. Work with partners to keep people safe in their neighbourhoods by reducing crime and anti-social behaviour and promoting social cohesion

Economy: Attract new businesses, jobs and opportunities whilst supporting our existing businesses in Fenland. Promote Fenland as a tourism and visitor destination. Promote and enable housing growth, economic growth and regeneration across Fenland.’

Based on Councillors' comments in recent months the Clerk suggested the Council's response could be as follows:

Communities: Whilst there is support for elderly people there is little evidence of support for young people.

Environment: On the whole Fenland District Council is performing well in this field thanks to its refuse service, Streetscene officers, rapid response system and work with the police on safety.

Economy: Delays in determining planning applications mean there is a risk job opportunities will be lost and there is little evidence of work to attract new businesses. Examples of delays include planning applications by Tesco's to convert the Chatteris store into two shops and the application to develop a garden centre in London Road. These applications should create extra jobs and should be straight forward as they involve sites with existing permissions; however they took many weeks to determine.

Where is the evidence that existing businesses are being supported? In Chatteris MMUK are about to leave the town with the loss of many jobs and another large employer, Forbo Adhesives, left a couple of years ago. What action was taken to try and persuade them to stay?

Tourism: Promotion of Fenland as a tourist destination is sporadic and often inaccurate, little emphasis is placed on Chatteris as a town to visit.

Housing Growth: Once again there have been delays in determining planning applications and even after plans are determined there appears to be little emphasis on encouraging developers to go ahead with the developments. Why is housing development buoyant in neighbouring districts but stagnant in Fenland? There are no major developments underway in Chatteris although a number are in the pipeline and this is now affecting the provision of school places in the town.

General Comment: Unfortunately, as usual, in the introduction to this report, there is emphasis on what is planned for Wisbech but no mention is made of FDC's plans for Chatteris.

In general members agreed with the comments but wished to make the following additional points:

Environment: The CCTV system operates well and is often used as a positive example of how systems should operate.

Economy: Chatteris Town Council calls on Fenland District Council to place greater emphasis on working with the partners, identified in the plan, to represent the interests of businesses in Fenland, in a concerted effort to encourage new businesses to set up in Fenland and to discourage existing businesses to move from the area.

General Comments: Greater emphasis should be made of the fact that Chatteris and March are within commutable distance of Cambridge and offer reasonably priced housing. In addition more should be made of the fact that in geographical terms Chatteris is at the heart of Cambridgeshire with reasonable road links to all major towns and cities.

It was **agreed** to submit the suggested response to all councillors for comments and approval.

L56 16/17 Promotional Leaflet for Chatteris

Cllr Smith had produced two drafts of a promotional leaflet for Chatteris. Members were very impressed by both which contained information on tourist attractions in the town, shops, take-aways and places to eat, etc. One leaflet was favoured over the other as it was easier to read and it was agreed that copies should be printed and distributed by the Town Council. Cllr Smith was keen to see the leaflets available in neighbouring towns.

It was also agreed there should be a link to the leaflet on the Council's website and the Visit Cambridgeshire website.

Cllr Carney thanked Cllr Smith for all her work on the project.

L57 16/17 Gas Lamps Project Update

The architect had been in touch to say he had met with a representative from Artistic Metalcraft who was preparing a quotation for the gas lamps, sign and accessories. He had also asked if the Council had any suggestions for a Chatteris-based building company who might be approached for the installation works. The Clerk had already suggested E Payne and Sons, members also suggested J T Chambers and Perce Baxter & Son Ltd.

L58 16/17 Little Acre Fen Project Update

The Clerk had obtained an estimate for all the work required to create a Pocket Park at Little Acre Fen from the CGM Group. She suggested the quotation was sufficiently detailed to allow the Council to use it to seek grant funding.

The quotation totalled £77,096.93. This included all the preparation works, seeding the area, creating a path, installing two parking bollards, creating a dry pond area and planting trees.

It was agreed the main thing was to set up the pocket park. The dry pond could be created at a later date and members were confident that sufficient trees would be donated to save the cost of purchasing them.

The total cost of the project (not including the dry pond and the trees) was £50,948.53, of this £45,176.60 was the cost of the footpath. The Clerk pointed out the Council had sufficient funds to pay for the work, excluding the footpath, from the leisure reserve and the solar farm donation but would need grant aid to fund the footpath.

On investigation of possible funding sources she had discovered there were really only two which were worth approaching: The Mick George Community Fund (via GrantScape) and the Big Lottery Fund – Reaching Communities. She had downloaded the criteria for both and looked at the application forms. Both required evidence of community support for the project which the Council currently lacked.

Cllr Smith said she was happy to carry out a survey of those using the Old Railway Line footpath to see if they supported the idea of a pocket park. It was also agreed to write to organisations seeking their support for the project, the WI, Rotary, In Bloom, the Allotments Association were all mentioned. It was also agreed to approach the schools.

The Clerk said the Grantscape application needed a third party donation of £11.41 for every £100 Grantscape released for the project.

It was **agreed to recommend that the Town Council should agree to fund 11.41% of the Little Acre Pocket Park Project** from the solar farm donation and the Leisure reserve. The Council would also be responsible for the future maintenance costs of the park.

It was also agreed the Clerk should enquire about Section 106 funding for the project.

L59 16/17 Any Other Business

LHI: The Clerk informed members that she would be attending the Fenland Local Highway Improvement Panel meeting on the 8th February to speak in support of the Council's LHI application for Doddington Road.

Grant Applications: Cllr Carney asked if the Town Council's grant application process could be discussed at a meeting. The Clerk said the Financial Officer was keen to arrange such a meeting ahead of the next round of applications in April. It was agreed this should be a daytime meeting at the convenience of Cllr Carney. Cllr Smith was keen to attend and Cllr Newell said she would attend if she was able. The Mayor would also be invited if he was well enough to attend.

Cllr Carney gave his apologies for the Planning Working Group meeting on the 31st January and the full council meeting on the 7th February as he would be working.

L60 16/17 Date of Next Meeting

Tuesday 21st February 2017.