

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

Minutes of a meeting held on Tuesday 12th July 2016

Present: Cllrs J Burrow (Chairman), J Carney, W Haggata, A Hay, F Newell and J Smith.

L18 16/17 Apologies for Absence

An apology for absence had been received from Mr Bob Ollier, FDC.

L19 16/17 Any Matters Arising from the Last Meeting of the Group

All matters arising were covered under agenda items.

L20 16/17 FDC Update

Mr Ollier had sent the following update:

1. Wenny Recreation Ground – works to complete the landscaping now progressing really well.
2. We will arrange an official opening of the skatepark during the school holidays, I would like some dates please?
3. Contractors (ISS WORLD) are working hard to get on top of all the grounds maintenance works.
4. Any specific problems with these works, then let me know.

The Clerk also read out a copy of a letter from Cllr Peter Murphy, which he had sent to fellow district councillors, regarding Fenland Open Spaces. Acknowledging the high number of comments about the open spaces, particularly grass cutting, he said there were three issues which had led to the comments:

- 1) Growing conditions, one of the wettest Junes on record had led to rapid growth.
- 2) ISS were in the first year of a contract and were having to establish cutting rounds and work out efficient routes to address the core workload.
- 3) Circle Roddons maintenance work was no longer carried out through a contact with FDC leading to confusion amongst the public, who were still reporting Roddons issues to FDC.

Cllr Murphy also outlined actions which had been taken to try and rectify the problems, these included meeting senior managers from ISS, ISS adding additional vehicle and staff to the contract, ISS reviewing their grass cutting round efficiency and ISS setting up a website to advise of grass cutting rounds and to receive comments. Cllr Murphy also asked councillors to advise him of any concerns regarding grounds maintenance.

Cllr Hay said she had already passed on a complaint that the contractors had dumped two large piles of grass cuttings under trees at the Fairledes field after cutting the field. She had been advised there had been no room on the lorry to take the cuttings away but they would be removed.

Cllrs Haggata and Burrow mentioned hedges in Juniper Drive and Anvil Close which needed to be cut back.

L21 16/17 Little Acre Fen Project

Cllr Smith reported on a meeting she had attended along with Cllrs Carney and Haggata and the Clerk to discuss the Little Acre Fen project. The group met with Ms Emily Haysom a landscape architect to discuss ideas for the council-owned land.

Cllr Smith had drawn up a rough plan with ideas for the site and said Ms Haysom was very interested in the ideas and also walked along the Old Railway Line to consider Councillors wishes to extend the made up surface of the footpath/bridleway to its junction with the Little Acre Fen site to create a link/circular route to West Street. Ms Haysom had suggested a hardcore surface and said she would be able to provide a price for the work.

Cllr Smith said among the ideas discussed were altering the route of the pathway through the site to make it less attractive to 4-wheel drive vehicles and creating a pinch point at the junction with the Old Railway line which could only be accessed by walkers, cyclists and possibly horse riders.

On the land there could be a reflective area where memorial or donated trees could be planted, an area raised as a mound to look out over the countryside, a dry pond (of imported stone and rocks) and seating of some description.

Cllr Carney said the first priority was to stop vehicular access to the Old Railway Line.

The Clerk had received an e-mail from Ms Haysom in which she stated the general consensus appeared to be for an informal, naturalistic park with varying landscape features to create interest for all age groups. The email stated:

The main features that you would like in the masterplan would be:

- Two entrances/pinch points to deter vehicles – from West Street end, and between the park and the bridleway to the west.
- Path through the park
- Mound feature
- Dry pond/dry stream feature - dry rocky area, with self-seeding, low maintenance planting
- Memorial woodland area where local people could pay for memorial trees to commemorate loved ones
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Other features that could be included are:

- Bog
- Orchard area under planted with wildflowers
- Giant fallen tree feature
- Bug hotel
- Simple seating

Planting would be naturalistic and low maintenance. Paths, bollards or signs, benches or other features would be of natural materials in keeping with the surrounding countryside.

The group agreed this captured all their ideas. The Clerk then informed them that the landscape design fee would be £1,500 plus VAT. This would be to produce: a sketch masterplan of the pocket park; a cost estimate of the park; and a typical cost per linear meter for new paths along the bridleway on the western edge forming links and circular walks, in crushed concrete, gravel or similar surface that would accommodate bicycles.

Members agreed that a proper plan and costings were required if they were to apply for grant funding for the scheme but it was felt as the price was so high another quotation was required (under financial regulations another two quotes were required).

Members suggested the local Wildlife Trust, the Forestry Commission and the Ouse Washes Project might be able to provide contacts. Ideas of local people who could be approached to carry out the work were also discussed.

Cllr Burrow asked if the group was satisfied that this should be the Town Council's flagship project and this was unanimously agreed.

Cllr Smith said if the Wenny Road development went ahead some people would be upset by the loss of open space and trees at that location and the Council would be able to explain that although it had no control over that land, which was allocated for development, they were trying to provide an alternative facility at the other end of the town.

Members agreed the plans to produce a pocket/miniature park should be publicised and engagement with the local community should be encouraged.

L22 16/17 Gas Lamps Project

The architect had been in touch again thanking the Council for their patience following his bereavement. Mr Davis said he was planning to begin work on the project when he returned from holiday in the middle of July. However he did say he would understand if the Council wished to commission others to complete the works.

Members agreed they had gone too far down the line to consider changing architect/project manager and the Clerk should nag Mr Davis to begin work and should point out one stream of funding was dependent on the work being completed by the end of the year.

The Clerk had also received an e-mail from the secretary of the Red Tile Wind Farm Trust Fund asking if the Council would be proceeding with the gas lamps project. The Clerk had confirmed the Council's intention to go ahead with the smaller scheme (estimated to cost £11,000).

L23 16/17 Any Other Business

Mayor's Charity Fund: Cllr Carney said he was planning to hold a presentation evening on the 24th August to present the proceeds of his Mayor's charity fund to local charities/causes. Following a donation from Saffron Cuisine, who had hosted the charity Indian meal, the fund stood at just over £1,000.

Cllr Carney said he planned to split the proceeds six ways and ran through the organisations he was planning to support. He agreed to a suggestion to make one change and support an Alzheimer's Group which met at Salem Court.

Old Huntingdon Road: The Clerk had e-mailed Bartlett's and County Highways about the problems of lorries having to turn in the Old Railway Line car park, and damaging the surface, after taking the wrong route to Bartlett's packing station (via the Old Huntingdon Road).

Mr Toby Bartlett had apologised and had assured the Clerk that all deliveries from abroad were given a full site plan and the correct entrance to use. He had also stated it was the end of the import season and the company would be moving back to East Anglian supplied produce which would be delivered in Bartlett's own vehicles. Mr Bartlett had also supplied his direct dial number in case there were any more issues.

County Highways had refused to put up extra signs warning drivers it was a no-through road. It was suggested local residents should be asked to take a note of the registration numbers and company names of any vehicles which were trying to turn in the car park in future.

Ideas for Next Meeting: Cllr Burrow was keen to see the Council build on the success of the 2016 annual town meeting when there was great engagement with the community. He asked how councillors would like the 2017 meeting to look.

One key point would be to review projects the Council had delivered on such as saving the street lights in the centre of the town (and thereby saving the Christmas Lights and In Bloom displays), the pocket park and the gas lamps project.

Councillors discussed a strap-line for the town and the most favoured suggestion was "Chatteris – A Strong Community".

Cllr Haggata said there was a need to look beyond the two projects currently underway – the gas lamps and pocket park schemes – and the waterways project could be the next venture, especially as the Inland Waterway's Restoration Committee would be holding its May meeting in Chatteris and it was hoped would focus its attention on the Southern part of the Fens Waterways Link. Cllr Smith said the Waterways project would benefit Chatteris and should be fully supported.

Noticeboard: The Clerk said the public noticeboard at Jubilee Gardens was in need of renovation as someone had attempted to set fire to the Perspex, there were numerous scratches on the Perspex and it was becoming difficult to open the doors.

Skatepark Opening: It was agreed to suggest the official skatepark opening ceremony should be one Tuesday morning in August (preferably the first Tuesday).

L24 16/17 Date of Next Meeting

Tuesday 20th September at 7pm.

