

CHATTERIS TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes Dated 7th August 2018

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Minutes of the meeting of Chatteris Town Council held on Tuesday 7th August 2018 at the Council Chambers, 14 Church Lane, Chatteris.

Present: Councillors W Haggata (Mayor), J Carney (Deputy Mayor), A Carney, A Hay, P Murphy, F Newell, J Smith and I Taylor.

71) To Accept Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence had been received from Cllrs L Ashley, J Burrow and K Patterson.

72) 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.

73) Open Forum

The Mayor welcomed four members of the public to the meeting.

The Financial Director of C & G Coaches began by pointing out £54,465 was paid to the Fenland Association of Community Transport (FACT) by Tesco's, under a Section 106 grant, to run a bus to the now mothballed store. The Financial Director said FACT was the only operator recommended to provide the service by the Council's planning department. She said three years later in a bid to get some value from the grant for the people of Chatteris and the surrounding area the Town Council had discussions with FACT to run a bus service to Ely on Saturdays.

The Financial Director said she was horrified to find the service was a commercial bus service and young people were being charged to ride. She said this was beneficial to FACT because it meant they could claim a fuel rebate and the organisation had not been upfront and transparent with the Council as they had not revealed the rebate.

There was currently a County Council enquiry into FACT's conduct after a forensic accountancy report into their operations showed some serious discrepancies.

The Financial Director suggested the Town Council should try and claw the money back, although she acknowledged this may be difficult as the money had been paid directly to FACT by Tesco's. She said she had advised Tesco's senior management of the position. The Financial Director said FACT should be made to continue with the pilot scheme, advertise it adequately and make no charge to riders. If the scheme did not work the Town Council should pursue other transport schemes and ensure FACT provided them free of charge to repay the money. Commercial tenders should be sought for comparison of costs.

C & G Coaches would charge about £225 a day for the current service and they could not claim fuel rebates. The money given would have sustained the service for 242 Saturdays. The Financial Director offered to hand out information and timetables for the service to pupils of Cromwell Community College, who travelled daily on C & G Coaches, with the college's agreement.

The Financial Director concluded by saying if the service did not work out she trusted the Council would ensure the money paid to FACT was brought back into services for the local community.

The Mayor said FACT had not insisted on the £2 charge, it had been the Town Council's idea to extend the length of the service. He said FACT's charge for the Saturday service was in line with figures quoted by the Financial Director and FACT had confirmed the money would last for four and three quarter years. He gave assurances that the Council was very conscious of how the money was being used and would ensure it was spent for the benefit of the people of Chatteris and the surrounding area.

The partners hoping to open a new tea shop in the High Street asked if there had been any update on their planning application. The Mayor said it would be discussed later in the meeting. They also asked if bushes at the rear of Jubilee Gardens could be cut back making it possible to position a couple of outdoor tables. They were advised to get their planning permission first and to then approach Fenland District Council who were responsible for the grounds maintenance.

74) Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the Town Council meeting held on Tuesday 3rd July 2018 were agreed and signed by the Mayor as a correct record.

75) Matters Arising from the Minutes

All matters arising from the Minutes were on the agenda.

76) Police Matters

Members received the following report:

Local Police

Please see attached the confidential report from Sgt Lugg on the Fenland Neighbourhood Policing team's work over the past month completed on 1st August. On 2nd August PCSO Dawn Rae sent an update stating overnight there had been thefts from vehicles in Chatteris.

Neighbourhood Alerts

3/8/18: Notification there had been no recorded crime in Chatteris within the last 24 hours. Warning to watch out for fake British Gas refund emails.

2/8/18: Notification of five thefts from motor vehicles (four thefts of tools and one of money) around Chatteris overnight the 1st/2nd August. During the same period there were two non-dwelling burglaries in the Willey Terrace area and one theft of two cycles in the same area. Warnings were given to not leave items on display in vehicles, to keep sheds locked, not to leave tools in vans overnight, if practicable, and if possible to leave vans in a garage overnight or in a well-lit area.

27/7/18: Warning to watch out for fake LinkedIn emails.

20/7/18: Alert about a rise in fake Amazon emails. All contain links to phishing websites designed to steal Amazon login details.

17/7/18: Request to complete a survey on the e-cops system.

7/7/18: Notification of a residential burglary in the New Road area in the early hours of 7th July.

6/7/18: Scam alert about fake Argos texts, these also lead to phishing websites designed to steal personal information.

Members had also received a copy of a reply from Sgt Lugg in response to the Council's letter about a lack of policing at the Midsummer Festival. Sgt Lugg said a court ruling meant the police could not charge for officers to help run events on public land and officers could only be provided for free if there was an identified risk. A risk assessment of the event did not meet the threshold for dedicated resources. Sgt Lugg said FDC was responsible for ensuring there was ample security in place.

Sgt Lugg also said officers could not be on standby and when a call for assistance was made he was unable to deploy immediately as there were more pressing incidents. By the time the police called for an update the incident had been dealt with.

He also said he was unable to utilise the opportunity to engage with the public of Chatteris due to further regulation and law. The police were not on duty during the Chatteris festival.

Sgt Lugg insisted the police were not favouring one event over another.

Cllr Carney asked why PCSO's from other towns or Specials could not have covered the event and councillors agreed the police should be alert to potential problems on the Saturday night in 2019.

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

Members had a copy of the latest updates (**copy attached**) and these were noted.

Cllr Smith said she had been planning to attend the CCTV partners' liaison meeting but it had been cancelled due to a lack of attendees.

78) Financial Officer's Report

Financial Statement

Members had before them a budgetary control statement for the Revenue (Precept) Account as at 31st July 2018 showing expenditure of £86,251.82 and income of £103,409.42 (including a half year's precept income) compared with budgets, along with a bank

reconciliation statement and a summary statement of reserves and funds balances.

DBS Checks

Members were advised that the Financial Officer was in the process of carrying out Enhanced DBS checks on two volunteers who work on behalf of the Town Council at the summer festival and other events within the community.

It was **RESOLVED** that the report be noted and approved.

(81) Payment of Accounts

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

£

Financial Officer	Payroll August 2018	1,028.60
Town Clerk	Payroll August 2018	1,497.57
HMRC	Payroll August 2018	628.71
Cambs Pension	Payroll August 2018	1,281.95
Zen Internet	Monthly Website fee	10.79
Barclays	July Bank Charges	89.60
The Old Bakery	Summer Festival Friday Night food	162.50
Ethos	Photocopier excess printing	109.36
Middle Level Commissioners	Annual Drainage Rates Allotments	146.12
Warboys Somersham & Pidley Drainage Board	Annual Drainage Rates Allotments	112.40
Chatteris In Bloom	First interim payment for plant watering service	517.50
S Payne	Grass cutting service, bench revamp & installation	1,030.00
Cash	Petty cash	36.79
Wave	Q Water bill Council Offices	52.43
British Gas	Q Gas Bill	273.82
British Elec	Q Elec Bill	211.68
Chatteris Army Cadets	Summer Festival Volunteer work contribution	60.00
Party Entertainments	Dave The Clown, Summer Fun	83.00

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Chatteris Town FC Young Lillies	Grant to voluntary organisations	350.00
Magpas	Grant to voluntary organisations	250.00
Reg Tibbitts	Reimb of Bunting Summer Fest	145.76
R J Warren	Chatteris Church Slabs & Picnic Table	2162.40
S J Butler	Stripey Wipey, Summer Fun	210.00
J Papworth	FDC Reimbursement Small grant re Chatteris Youth Club	500.00
David J Richards Ltd	Summer Fun leaflets	133.24
Total		£11,084.22

82) Planning

Planning applications a) to e) (as shown on the **appended list**) were considered and it was agreed to return the following recommendations to Fenland District Council marked as follows:

- a) Noted as site already has permission for similar
- b) Support, welcome new business
- c) Support, welcome new business
- d) Support
- e) Support

There was a discussion on b) following receipt of an objection claiming the town did not need another food outlet of this sort and arguing against the loss of a retail unit. Members pointed out there were already a number of empty shops in the town. They welcomed a new business in the town.

Cllr Ashly had submitted recommendations on applications a) to d).

Biomass: The Clerk asked if anyone wished to attend the County Council meeting when the application for a biomass energy plant at Warboys Landfill Site would be discussed. No-one volunteered to attend.

PAS Review: A thank you to those who had attended the Planning Service review at FDC had been received, along with a promise to share the final report. Cllr Smith and the Mayor attended the review and Cllr Haggata managed to mention several areas of concern.

Appeal: The Clerk notified members that Mr R Carr had appealed against FDC's refusal to grant retrospective planning permission for the erection of 2 canopies to the side garden of the existing dwelling at 1 The Bungalows, Westbourne Road. The Town Council had opposed the plan and did not wish to make further comments.

Decisions: The Clerk updated members on the latest planning decisions from Fenland District Council. The following had been granted:

Extension to Eclipse Scientific premises; works to a Lime tree at 3 Belmont Gardens; Single storey extension to 75 London Road; erection of porch and fence at 30 St Martins Road; display of signs at South Fens Business Centre; alterations to listed building at 53 Station Street and felling of a Plum tree at 31 York Road.

The following had been refused:

Erection of a dwelling at land east of 24 Pound Road; certificate of lawful use for 2 metre high wall at 46 New Road and conversion of existing domestic extension to separate 1-bed dwelling at 117 Green Park.

83) Plans for Mobile Bank

The Clerk reported that she had been approached by the manager of Lloyds Bank in Chatteris asking about the siting of a mobile banking van in the town on Wednesdays (from 10.30am to 12.15pm) and Fridays (1pm to 2.30pm) after the bank closed in October.

Initially the idea of siting the van on the market area in Park Street had been discussed but the site did not meet the criteria (minimum of 3 to 4 parking spaces and near toilet facilities) so the Clerk had suggested Furrowfields car park. She had passed on the request to the relevant officer at FDC. Unfortunately FDC had dragged their heels and the Clerk had chased asking for a quick decision to ensure Chatteris did not miss out.

The Clerk was seeking the Town Council's backing that such a facility would be welcome and FDC should be encouraged to give the necessary permission.

Members agreed it would be really important for Chatteris and that Furrowfields was the best location. They also agreed FDC should be encouraged to grant permission. Cllr Hay said she would seek an update from the relevant officer. Cllr Carney was keen to see the proposed opening hours increased. Members agreed it would be important to advertise the service in the bank before it closed.

84) Leisure & General Purposes Working Group Report & Recommendations

Cllr Smith (Chairman) presented the minutes of the Leisure and General Purposes Working Group meeting held on Tuesday 17th July 2018 (**copy attached**).

L18) FDC Update: Cllr Murphy confirmed hedges and trees had been cut back in the cemetery.

The Clerk said she had received a quote for a bin to be installed at the Church meadow - £308.74 plus VAT. Cllr Murphy said it was badly needed as there had been a “disgusting” amount of litter in the area which he had been picking up. The Clerk said she had also received a complaint from a member of the Church about anti-social behaviour around the picnic table and a call for the table to be removed.

Members **agreed** to purchase a bin (the location to be agreed) but did not agree to the removal of the bench. Cllr Smith said just because some people did not use it in the way anticipated the Council should not give in; other people were enjoying the new facility. Councillors asked about CCTV coverage and were assured there was a camera on the Church. Cllr Taylor suggested putting up signs warning of CCTV coverage. Cllr Haggata was keen to pursue the idea of extending the pathway so it reached the paved area and bench. The Financial Officer said the contractors had now been paid for the paving works as they had finally laid all the remaining slabs.

L20) Little Acre Fen: Cllr Smith reported the area had been sprayed and was looking good. Two meetings had been held at the site, one with a representative of Froglife who had given advice and plans on how to develop a pond area, complete with dipping platform. Costings were now required. The gentleman had also been keen on the Council’s idea of a viewing mound and said he would help to work out how much soil and spoil would be required. Cllr Smith had been in contact with Anglian Water who had no objections in principle to the idea of concealing the pumping station fencing, possibly with hedging.

L24) Next Meeting: It was agreed the next meeting would be held in the Council Chambers.

85) Growing Fenland – Chatteris Update

Members had received a copy of the letter from Mr Gary Garford, FDC’s Corporate Director, regarding the timetable for producing the Growing Fenland, Market Town Masterplan for Chatteris.

The letter had been referred to by Cllr Mason at the Leisure meeting who had explained consultants would be appointed by the end of August and would then work with the stakeholder groups to prepare a draft plan which would go to FDC in April ready for publishing in May.

As suggested at the Leisure meeting the Clerk had approached Stainless Metalcraft and Bartletts about joining the stakeholder group and Cllr Benney had approached Mr George Munns. The Clerk was delighted to confirm that Mr Martin Lawrence (of Metalcraft), Mr Toby Bartlett and Mr Munns had all agreed to join the stakeholder group (which would also comprise councillors Haggata, Hay and Benney).

The first meeting was scheduled for the 23rd August when the group would decide on ideas for the plan which they would then present to the consultants.

86) Ely Shuttle Bus Update

The Clerk presented the following report to Councillors:

‘Background

The Ely Shuttle Bus service was launched on the 9th June by Fenland Association of Community Transport using Section 106 Funding given to FACT by Tesco’s.

Originally the aim was for FACT to run buses to the new Tesco’s store but after Tesco’s categorically stated they would not be opening a store in Chatteris, the Town Council asked if the money (£54,000) could be used for another bus service to benefit the people of Chatteris and the surrounding area.

This was agreed and FACT asked for proof of the service required. Questionnaires were sent out and completed and it was decided to run a bus service to Ely Leisure Village and the Railway Station (Tesco’s) once in the afternoon and once in the evening on a Saturday. The service was open to unaccompanied young people aged 14 up - provided their parents had signed a disclaimer - in addition to adults and accompanied children. It was agreed a payment of £2 for each return journey should be sought to keep the service going.

Service to Date

The Mayor requested an update on the service and on the 17th July the Manager of FACT Ms Jo Philpott said the route had operated for 6 weeks and a total of 6 people had made the return trip, all of whom were over 18. The Clerk had four disclaimers signed by parents of children aged between 14 and 18.

Following the publication of the long awaited report of an investigation into FACT by forensic accountants, the Clerk was contacted by the owner of C and G Coaches who asked about the service, whether it was registered and the weekly cost.

The Clerk emailed FACT requesting once again the cost of providing the service and proof it was registered. This time Ms Philpott responded and confirmed it was registered under a Section 19 permit as a Group Member, namely Chatteris Town Council (the Council having joined FACT as a group member in May 2018). The Section 19 permit was issued by Cambridgeshire County Council, who are authorised agents on behalf of the Secretary of State. The Section 19 permit was allowed as the shuttle bus was classed as recreation and of benefit to the community.

Ms Philpott also confirmed the weekly costings were £215 and at that level the funds would last for approximately 4 and ³/₄ years. (These costings were in line with figures suggested by C and G Coaches).

The Future

With the proposed opening of a Tesco store in Chatteris, there must be some doubt over the future of the Ely shuttle bus service although, according to the Cambs Times, the report into FACT stated that if the bus service to Tesco’s had begun operation it would have been illegal.

It is worth noting that the Section 106 agreement was drawn up by Fenland District Council, not Chatteris Town Council. The Town Council merely wanted to ensure that money paid over for the benefit of Chatteris people was not lost and was used to provide a service for Chatteris residents.

The Town Council agreed the Ely Shuttle Bus service should have the opportunity to get established, even if initial numbers were low. Two months in it is now worth considering the following questions:

- 1) How long should the service continue given its current low level of support?
- 2) Should the route be changed to include a stop in Ely city centre?
- 3) Should the £2 return journey charge continue?
- 4) How can the service be promoted to increase usage?'

Since writing the report the Clerk said Mrs Philpott had resigned from FACT and the Clerk had been informed that a bus service to Tesco's would no longer be illegal as FACT now had a bus operators' licence.

Members agreed the service should be allowed to continue, especially as it had been launched over the summer when numbers were likely to be low.

However they did agree more publicity was needed – more posters around the town, another push on Facebook, a warning that it was time to use it or lose it and a request for posters to go up in Wimblington and Doddington. The Mayor was determined to try and ensure the money was used for the benefit of people in Chatteris and the surrounding area but admitted if Tesco's wanted to use the money for a bus to their new store it was unlikely the Council would be able to argue against it.

Councillors also agreed there should be a stop in Ely city centre (as had been requested).

The Clerk asked if Councillors wished to continue with the £2 charge per journey. Cllr Hay suggested asking if FACT did receive a rebate on fuel duty before the Council made a decision on the £2. This was agreed.

Councillors agreed that it would be a real shame if FACT folded as it provided a community service that a lot of people relied on, particularly the elderly. It was unlikely that bus companies and taxis would be able to provide the same service.

87) Summer Fun

The Clerk reported there had been two Summer Fun shows at the King Edward Centre, organised by and funded by the Town Council, and both had been very successful. The first show, by Booster Cushion, had attracted about 100 children and babies plus accompanying adults. Numbers were slightly down the second week (for new act Squirry Wirty) but this was probably due to the church holiday club and the heat.

There were still two shows to go, Stripey Wipey, who was always a firm favourite, and Dave the Clown.

88) Chatteris In Bloom

Cllr Smith gave a verbal report on In Bloom beginning by saying the public appeared to be appreciative of this year's display. She said the Council's grant to pay for someone to water the planters and hanging baskets had been a lifesaver as it had been such a long, hot summer.

Judging day had gone well and Cllr Smith thanked FDC for their efforts, despite their problems, and Cllr Murphy for ensuring it happened. Cllr Smith said hopefully Chatteris had a strong entry in the In Bloom competition. It was amazing how long it took to prepare the displays and how much effort was involved. Cllr Smith confirmed all organisations and individuals who had helped with the entry had been thanked.

The Mayor said the Council should send a letter of appreciation to all the In Bloom volunteers for their wonderful efforts. Cllr Murphy also congratulated Cllr Smith for such a wonderful job on judging day and said he believed the judges were very impressed. Cllr Smith said everyone worked well together.

89) New Footpath Update

The Clerk reported that the plans to legalise the footpath running from Wenny Road Recreation ground to The Elms had taken a step forward.

Councillors were reminded that the Town Council had taken over responsibility of the project to legalise the footpath, following the death of County Councillor Sandra Rylance.

The County Council had now made a Definitive Map Modification Order, under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, to record the footpath as Public Footpath 32 Chatteris. The Order would be advertised for six weeks from the 8th August in the Hunts Post and on the Public Noticeboard in town. Anyone wishing to make a representation or objection would have to do so by the 20th September 2018. If no objections or representations were received the Order would be made by the County Council and the route recorded on the Definitive Map. If representations or objections were received the application would go to the Planning Inspectorate for a decision.

Members noted the progress.

90) Plans for Memorial for Victims of Lancaster Bomber Crash

Major Norman Larke had set a date for a meeting to discuss the possibility of create a permanent memorial to those who lost their lives when a Lancaster bomber crashed on the outskirts of Chatteris in February 1945 when returning from a raid on Dortmund, Germany.

The bomber crashed within site of the old gas works in Chatteris and Major Larke was suggesting the memorial should be sited within vision of that area, so either near Stainless Metalcraft or near Tesco's. (Cllr Carney suggested it could be placed near the front of Tesco's.)

The Mayor said he was in favour of the project which would be discussed at a meeting, open to all councillors, on Monday 3rd September at the Cross Keys Hotel.

91) Traffic Issues

LHI: The Clerk informed members that no application for LHI funding had been submitted (as notified through email correspondence). This was because Councillors had agreed to the abandonment of the original idea, to apply for funding for a zebra crossing in Wenny Road, after the Principal of the College had indicated that it was likely a crossing would be provided as part of the development of a primary school on the College site. In response to the Town Council's letter County Highways had confirmed the only way to fund the zebra crossing would be via an LHI initiative or as part of associated works for the new development. Councillors had not agreed on an alternative LHI scheme and therefore no application had been submitted for the 2019/20 season.

Councillors had considered a suggestion from a resident of St Pauls Drive that they should apply for double yellow lines on one side of New Road but had rejected the idea because so many houses along New Road did not have off road parking, removing the cars would speed up the traffic and it was unlikely the lines would be policed. In addition it was unlikely such a scheme would attract sufficient points to gain LHI funding.

Traffic Order: Notification had been received of an Order for a temporary prohibition of through traffic along Huntingdon Road (A141), Chatteris, and High Fen Straight Drove, Warboys, between 8pm and 7am from the 10th to 14th September to facilitate carriageway resurfacing and associated works.

Integrated Highways: Information had been received about the Integrated Highways Management Centre, whose role was to control congestion on the County's roads by getting real time information and gathering data from incidents. The Centre produced a monthly report on information gathered and a copy of the report for June 2018 was included.

Bulletin: The latest bulletins listing road works & events affecting the highway had been received.

92) Correspondence

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

Job vacancies: Councillors agreed that Greenvale AP should not be allowed to advertise on the public noticeboard as it would set a precedent. They could, however, be advised that there was a Facebook page advertising jobs in Chatteris.

Town Guide: Cllr Smith said most of the information for inclusion in the Town Guide had now been passed to Cllr Patterson who was populating the pages with text over the summer, with the aim of having a copy ready for proof reading by the end of September.

Cllr Smith had chased up most of the updates and was just waiting for a couple of organisations to send her their information.

The Mayor gave a big thank you to Cllrs Smith and Patterson for their time spent on the project.

93) Reports

The Mayor said he and Cllr Hay had attended the opening of the new facilities at Chatteris Town Football Club. Unfortunately Cllr Smith had been forced to send her apologies due to a family bereavement.

94) Items for the Next Agenda

Cllr Taylor said the Council was likely to receive a petition from residents of Burnsfield Estate calling for play equipment on the green. The petitioners were currently collecting signatures.

The following item (95) All Weather Pitch Carpet Replacement Fund) was taken **In Committee** due to the sensitive nature of the business to be transacted.