

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

Minutes of a meeting held on Tuesday 18th September 2018

Present: Cllrs J Smith (Chairman), W Haggata and F Newell.

L32 18/19 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence had been received from Cllrs L Ashley, J Carney and A Hay.

L33 18/19 FDC Update

Mr Bob Ollier, FDC's open spaces manager, was welcomed to the meeting. He gave the following update:

In Bloom: Mr Ollier was delighted that Chatteris had once again won gold in the In Bloom competition and said the town came 2nd in its category – the winners Halstead had 40 to 50 volunteers involved.

Church Meadow: The slabbing was complete and rotavating the area should start later in the week in preparation for seeding. As the Town Council had paid for the slabbing, Mr Ollier confirmed the Council would be reimbursed from Section 106 funds when FDC next made its payments.

Little Acre Fen Pocket Park: The footpath was complete and R J Warrens were planning to seed the area in October. The area had been sprayed in July and was due for another spraying. The Clerk said the gate was about to be installed so she would contact Warrens and either supply them with a key or arrange for them to collect it from her.

Wenny Recreation Ground: Mr Ollier said the bench which had been pulled out was at the Tivoli yard and should be re-installed within the next couple of weeks. The damaged bench in the shelter had been repaired some time ago. Mr Ollier asked if councillors wished to see the whole Alder hedge at Wenny cut back as it was encroaching on to the recreation ground as it was a winter job which should be completed before the birds began nesting. It was agreed the brambles and hedge should be cut back. Cllr Haggata also asked for the hedge behind properties in Holly Mews and Hazel Close to be cut down so it was just above the properties' fences. He agreed to check just how low the homeowners wished the hedge to go.

Cllr Smith said one of the new trees planted at the entrance to the Recreation Ground appeared to have died and she asked if it could be replaced.

Cllr Haggata asked if the sign at the entrance which stated no cycling could be altered as the path around the ground was also designed for cycles. Mr Ollier said it was not possible to alter the bye-law sign and members pointed out most people ignored it.

Meeks Cemetery: Mr Ollier said the gate was still being refurbished but he would arrange for it to be put back soon.

Section 106 Funding: Councillors had asked if Section 106 funding, amounting to about £74,000, which was earmarked for the Larham Way play area could be used for other purposes as other Sec 106 funds had virtually dried up. Mr Ollier explained that when the developers first applied to use part of the Larham Way play area for an underpass he had priced up improvements to the area including a decent height fence (to stop balls going over the top) , multi play equipment aimed at 8 to 14 year olds and refurbishment of the equipment for younger children. This all amounted to about £82,000. Only work to tidy up the area, after the underpass was built, had been completed so most of the money remained and had a clawback date of September 2019. Mr Ollier admitted he was unsure if the developer would allow it to be used elsewhere. He suggested it would be necessary to demonstrate that the public wished it to be used elsewhere, so a consultation exercise would need to be carried out. Cllr Smith suggested part of the money could be used for better equipment at St Paul's play area.

Cllr Haggata asked if it could be used to fund a cycle path from Doddington Road (the Slade End roundabout) to the underpass. Mr Ollier thought this was unlikely, as it was a highways matter, and Cllr Haggata said he would ask if Tesco's would fund the cycle path when he attended the opening of Jacks (the new Tesco's discount store). It was noted there were no cycle racks outside Jacks and Poundstretchers and Cllr Haggata agreed to also request the provision of racks.

Councillors had also suggested spending Sec 106 money on improving the brown tourists' signs and interpretation signs in Chatteris. Mr Ollier suggested speaking to Mr Garry Edwards.

Cemetery: The Clerk had received a complaint, from a member of the public, about a tree being felled in the New Road Cemetery. Mr Ollier said the tree had split out completely and could not be saved so it had to be taken down on safety grounds.

Mr Ollier was thanked for attending.

L34 18/19 Matters Arising from the Last Meeting of the Group

L28) Froglife: The Clerk was still waiting to hear back from the man from Froglife with a cost of constructing the pond. She agreed to chase up the matter.

L29) Church Meadow: There were allegations that the area was being used by drug users and dealers. The Clerk pointed out drug users had always gathered in the area, in the past they had been hidden at the back of the site, now at least they were visible. Cllr Smith said Mrs Sue Unwin still had the butterfly bench as she had paid for it from her own pocket and was now awaiting reimbursement. Mrs Unwin was hoping the owners of the BP garage would make a contribution to the cost and there was a possibility In Bloom would have some funds to put towards it. Cllr Smith asked if there was any possibility the Town Council could help

with costs. If the money was forthcoming the aim was bolt the bench to the slabbed area in the meadow. Cllr Smith confirmed the new bin at the site was now being emptied by FDC.

L30) Photos: The Clerk had tried to contact Mr Chambers about having his photograph taken but was unsure if she had the correct telephone number. Cllr Newell agreed to supply a number. The Clerk also asked about printing out the photographs and Cllr Smith suggested asking David Richards printers.

L30) Planters: The Clerk confirmed the planters would be installed on the 21st September.

L35 18/19 Little Acre Fen Project Update

Community Orchard: Cllr Haggata and the Clerk had met with Mr Howard Jones, from Orchards East, to discuss the possibility of planting a community orchard at the Pocket Park. Mr Jones had been very positive and enthusiastic about the site. He suggested about 15 heritage species of trees could be planted and he was happy to supply the trees subject to the Clerk completing a short questionnaire (which she had already done). He also said he might be able to supply hedging and cobnuts, which could create an archway to walk through. He would not be able to supply stakes and trees guards but the Clerk assured him that would not be a problem. Cllr Haggata told Mr Jones the plan was to plant trees this winter and told members at the meeting he hoped the Little Acre Fen Project would be complete by May. Mr Jones was now on holiday but when he returned he had promised to discuss which trees could be planted.

Volunteers: Members agreed there was a definite need to get volunteers involved in the Pocket Park project, particularly to help with planting. Cllr Smith said the Wildflower Trust suggested holding a special day and it was agreed a planting day should be organised in November or after Christmas and the Council should supply soup and rolls. Hopefully the promise of food and involvement in planting a community orchard would entice people along. It would be best to advertise the need for volunteers in Centrepont and the local press and to put the word out that help was needed.

Healthy Fenland: The Council was still waiting to hear if it could apply to the Healthy Fenland project for funding for Little Acre Fen and it was agreed to follow this up.

Memorial Trees: Rachael's Plants had recommended planting Hornbeam and Rowan trees as memorial trees and had sent a list of prices. The Clerk had also researched tree guards which would deter deer and rabbits and protect the trees. Members were unsure if the trees suggested would be large enough and agreed a trip to view the trees would be the best way forward.

L36 18/19 Chatteris Medieval Fayre 2019

The Clerk had received a number of papers relating to plans to hold a Chatteris Medieval Fayre on the 27th and 28th April 2019 (just after St George's Day).

The plans had been put together by David and Rebecca Leaning of the Cross Keys Hotel who were seeking permission from the Parish Church and the Town Council to hold the fayre on the rear and front of the church grounds

Mr and Mrs Leaning said the event would be completely self-funded and there would be no licensable activities. Arrangements for first aid, public liability and risk assessments were all covered in the documentation.

Mr and Mrs Leaning said they had already run two such events at their previous establishment in Calne, Wiltshire, where they had worked with the Rotary Club and the Town Council and both events had been very successful.

The Chatteris event would be medieval processions and demonstrations between 10am and 4pm and these would include living history tents, an armed medieval siege display and various displays of medieval combat. Two medieval banquets were also planned in the Cross Keys, the first for the re-enactors and the second for the general public.

Mr and Mrs Leaning listed the outcomes of the event pointing out it should result in good performances, it should encourage participation as it would be free to attend, it would help to boost tourism and local trade and would help to promote Chatteris in a positive light.

The Clerk pointed out Fenland District Council would have to be consulted as they maintained the area but it would mainly require the permission of the Church authorities. Risk assessments would have to go to FDC and the Church.

Members agreed to **recommend the Council support, in principle, the idea of the Medieval Fayre.**

L37 18/19 Any Other Business

Bins: Cllr Smith said she had received a request for a bin at the bus stop near Aldi and another in Doddington Road. The Clerk said she would enquire if there were funds available for more bins. FDC would have to agree the locations as they would have to empty them.

Footpath: Cllr Smith said the path from Tithe along London Road to Stocking Drove was very uneven and the vegetation needed to be cut back. The footpath from the leek factory to Wenny Road also required attention. The Clerk agreed to pass on the requests to the Highways Officer.

L38 18/19 Date of Next Meeting

A date for the next meeting of the Leisure Group had still to be agreed, the choices being the 9th or 16th of October 2018.