

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

Minutes of a meeting held on Tuesday 11th February 2020

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

L55 19/20 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence had been received from Cllrs A Charrier and A Hay.

L56 19/20 FDC Update

Mr Phil Hughes, FDC Head of Leisure Services, had responded to points raised by the Council at the previous meeting.

Councillors had asked for suppliers of play equipment, used by FDC, so they could suggest items of play equipment for Larham Way. Mr Hughes gave details of suppliers and Councillors asked for those details to be forwarded so they could look on the websites for ideas.

Councillors expressed disappointment that the new play equipment at Wenny Recreation Ground did not include a replacement slide and appeared to be mainly swings.

The Clerk had asked about lighting Wenny Recreation Ground and had suggested solar lighting. Mr Hughes said engineers felt the technology and functionality needed to improve prior to useage. He said to light the skatepark alone using electricity would cost £18k (assuming power was present at the site) and there was no funding available for this. The Clerk said she had obtained prices for solar lights for Dock Road and was considering asking the company to visit and confirm how many lights would be needed. She would also ask them to visit Wenny Recreation Ground at the same time.

Councillors asked about plans for Meeks Cemetery. Mr Hughes suggested a Friends group needed to be set up to support and guide any work. The war graves were now in their own boarded off area with chipped spaces so they looked smarter and cared for.

Mr Hughes also confirmed what Cllr Murphy had already told councillors that the gaps in the bollards around the grassed areas of the parish church grounds were due to underground pipes. He said the gaps would be filled either by boulders or hand digging in additional bollards.

The Clerk had received two complaints about hedgerows and trees from Wenny Recreation Ground overhanging gardens in Juniper Drive. She had passed both complaints to Mr Hughes who said contractors Tivoli had taken a look and they might reduce the height of the hedge but they would not be trimming over a private property boundary. Cllr Haggata commented the matter was no further forward than it was two years ago.

L57 19/20 Matters Arising from the Last Meeting of the Group

The only matter not on the agenda was the Fens Biosphere and the Clerk said Ms Rachael Brown, of ACRE, had agreed to attend the next meeting of the Leisure group on the 17th March for an informal talk about the Fens Biosphere project.

L58 19/20 Little Acre Fen Pocket Park

Cllr Smith said details of a drawing competition to choose the child to open the pocket park and another to open the pond, on the 25th April, were being sent out to the schools.

Pictures of the Fen Tiger statue on the move from Stainless Metalcraft to the Pocket Park had been posted on social media that day and it was likely the statue had now been installed. The aim was to grow rushes and prickly bushes around the statue so it would not be damaged by visitors. Cllr Smith reported the noticeboard for the orchard had also gone in.

Cllr Smith reported she and the Clerk had met with Mr Phil Clark who had been instrumental in giving advice when the pocket park was in the planning stages. He had been impressed by what had been achieved and gave advice on a range of topics from bird and owl boxes, to applying for funding (in particular lottery funding) and how to maintain the park. His advice had been to cut the park less often and to even leave one area for three years between cuts. Mr Clark pointed out the wildlife which was already visiting the park.

The Clerk said she would be reporting the Willow trees on the approach road to the park to the County Council as they appeared to be in need of attention.

Cllr Smith said the Friends of the Pocket Park (FLAPP) were planning a planting day on the Saturday when the plants to shield the pumping station would be going in – weather permitting. Cllr Carney said high visibility vests for FLAPP volunteers were on their way.

Cllr Carney suggested temporary fencing around the pond area might be advisable, until the bushes and rushes became established, because at present there was easy access to the pond for children and dogs. Cllr Smith offered to speak to one of the FLAPP volunteers who was good at creating barriers.

Some work had been carried out on the approach road to the pocket park but further work was required. The Clerk suggested it might be a question of improving a section each year.

L59 19/20 VE Day 75 Commemorations

The Clerk had met with Major Norman Larke, of the RBL, to discuss plans to commemorate the 75th anniversary of the end of the war in Europe, on the 8th May, a Bank Holiday.

A suggested timetable had been received which included events at 3pm, 6.55pm and 7pm.

Major Larke had sourced a piper to join pipers all over the world in playing two pieces of music at 3pm near the war memorial, the cost was £150 and councillors agreed to pay half the cost. At the same time civic leaders were being encouraged to lead local communities in a

toast to the heroes of World War II. Councillors discussed how best to mark the occasion and agreed in the end to purchase a barrel of beer (or similar) and give small cups of beer to those who attended to make the toast. Lemonade would be available as an alternative. If possible the toast would take place outside but if the weather was not good the toast could be in the council chambers. Cllr Smith suggested decorating the building with bunting.

At 6.55pm the Town Crier had agreed to take part in the Cry for Peace Around the World and at 7pm there was an opportunity for the church bells to ring out but the person responsible for the bells was unsure if he would have a team. The idea of lighting the beacon was discussed but it was pointed out it would not get dark until later in the evening.

It was agreed people were unlikely to turn out twice in a day so it was suggested it might be possible to make the Cry after the Piper had finished. The Clerk agreed to broach the idea with the Town Crier.

On the Sunday churches were being encouraged to hold services of celebration and commemoration with a reading of a Tribute to the Millions. It was not known if the Parish Church would be organising such a service. In the afternoon the RBL was planning a party at the Working Men's Club with entertainment by Back 2. Tickets would be sold for the event.

L60 19/20 Annual Town Meeting

The Clerk reported the annexe of the King Edward Centre had been booked for the Annual Town Meeting on the 22nd May. Cllr Carney confirmed the big screen would be available and he offered to act as projectionist.

Mr David Johnson had agreed the Council could show his promotional film of Chatteris and said he might also have a short film of highlights of the Festival ready. The Clerk asked if photographs could be taken of the Pocket Park and the opening of the park so these could also be screened.

It was agreed the programme for the evening should be: reports, a talk by Cllr Benney on investment in the town (if he was willing), screening of the films and finally questions from the public.

Tea, coffee and home-made refreshments would be served at the close.

L61 19/20 Electric Vehicle Chargepoints

Helpful information about Electric Vehicle Chargepoints had been received from the County Council's Energy Projects Officer Emily Bolton.

Ms Bolton had also outlined the criteria for applying for a grant for an On-Street Residential Chargepoint scheme. It was possible for Chatteris to meet most of the criteria and the Clerk had queried if it would be possible, with FDC's permission, to locate a chargepoint in a public car park (such as the Church Lane car park). Ms Bolton confirmed this was possible.

The Town Council would have to agree to meet ongoing commitments such as maintenance and providing usage data.

Cllr Carney said there were a few such chargepoints in Cambridge and the City Council appeared to be responsible for some of them. It was suggested a chargepoint in Chatteris could also be located in one of the supermarket car parks if the store agreed.

Cllr Haggata was keen for Chatteris to lead the way on the provision of chargepoints and Cllr Carney said professional people moving in to the town would be looking for such provisions as would visitors on their way through the town.

It was agreed to take up Ms Bolton's kind invitation to attend a Leisure Meeting so members could gain more information.

L62 19/20 Any Other Business

Sign: Cllr Haggata said the road sign outside Jacks was now in an even worse state of repair and was degrading to Chatteris. He asked if the Town Council could insist the County Council took action as it was creating the wrong impression. The Clerk said she would pass the comments on and would copy in Cllr Hay as the County Councillor.

Buses and Cycles: Cllr Haggata said the Government had promised large sums of money to be spent on improving bus services and cycling and he suggested the Town Council should get in early with a request for a fair share of the money to be spent in Chatteris. He suggested the Council should lobby MP Mr Steve Barclay and Mayor of the Combined Authority Mr James Palmer, asking for investment in Chatteris – in particular the restoration of an hourly bus service and investment in a bus service to Manea Railway Station. This was agreed.

Promotional Signs: Cllr Carney asked for a follow up to the call for additional promotional signs for Chatteris to be added to the name signs for the town.

FACT: Cllr Ashley reported that she, Cllr Haggata and the Clerk had attended a useful meeting with FACT to discuss bus services. FACT had offered to arrange magnetic, promotional signs for Chatteris Town Council to go on the side of the buses. It had also been agreed to continue the monthly service to St Ives and to launch a new monthly service to Peterborough on the first Saturday of every month from the beginning of April. Both services would be fully advertised including adverts in the Fenland Citizen.

L63 19/20 Date of Next Meeting

Tuesday 17th March 2020.