

# CHATTERIS TOWN COUNCIL

## Minutes Dated 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2020

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Minutes of a meeting of Chatteris Town Council held on Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2020 at the Council Chambers, 14 Church Lane, Chatteris.

**Present:** Councillors L Ashley (Mayor), I Benney (Deputy Mayor), J Carney, A Charrier, A Gowler, W Haggata, A Hay, P Murphy, F Newell, M Petrou, J Smith and I Taylor

### 223) Apologies for Absence

There were no apologies for absence as all councillors were present.

### 224) Declarations of Interest and Dispensations to Speak and Vote on Declarable Pecuniary Interest Items

Cllrs Benney, Hay and Murphy declared an interest in all planning matters as members of Fenland District Council's planning committee.

### 225) Open Forum

There was one member of the public present who wished to film the proceedings but did not wish to speak.

It was **resolved** to exclude the public and press from the meeting while the following two items were discussed: 226) Leisure Facilities and 227) Operation Bridges Protocol, as publicity would prejudice the public interest by reason of the **confidential nature** of the business to be transacted.

The member of the public was asked to leave the building and to take his recording equipment with him.

**At this point** the member of the public was invited to join the meeting again and Cllr Taylor informed him that he was not allowed to be on film at all or be heard because he looked after

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vulnerable children. He said he was supported by the County Council on this and he was prepared to take the matter to court.

Cllr Murphy then posed the following questions, which are followed by the member of the public's answer:

Q1 What are going to do about the imagery you are taking? Answer. Going to upload it to the internet.

Q2 How long are you going to store it for? A. Don't know.

Q3 Where will it be published? A. Probably on Youtube

Q4 How long will it be kept before it is deleted? A. Don't know.

Q5 Will it be edited? A. I was going to add the agenda points at the bottom. I will edit it to ensure Cllr Taylor isn't included.

Q6 Have you got a data protection policy? A. No

Q7 Can this council have a copy before any editing goes on?

Cllr Murphy then suggested the filming should not go ahead that evening until answers to the questions had been sorted out as the member of the public did not have the answers to half the questions. Cllr Murphy put forward the following resolution:

Councillors agree that no filming takes place tonight unless the points raised are resolved. This was unanimously **agreed**.

The member of the public was asked to delete what had been filmed and to remove the camera but was told he was entitled to stay in the meeting.

## **228) Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

The minutes of the full council meeting held on 4<sup>th</sup> February 2020 were agreed and signed as a correct record by the Mayor.

## **229) Matters Arising from the Minutes**

Min 206) Connections Bus: The Clerk had received attendance records for the first three sessions of the Connections Bus which showed numbers had risen from 13 to 24/25. Members were pleased with the figures and Cllr Taylor said he had received no complaints about the bus being located at Furrowfields car park, a more accessible site.

## **230) Police Matters**

Members had received the following report of information received from the police in the past month:

### **Local Police**

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Please see attached the partially confidential report from Sgt Richard Lugg and PCSO Dawn Rae on the Fenland Neighbourhood Policing team's work over the past month.

Fenland District Council had sent out an email giving details of the Police and Crime Commissioner's Youth and Community Fund which aimed to support youth and community groups to deliver activities to: support preventative work and early intervention approaches to divert young people and vulnerable adults; build relationships with young people; promote

the involvement of young people in building resilience to crime and vulnerability and work to reduce the vulnerability of young people.

Voluntary and community organisations could apply for grants of up to £3,000 towards their project.

Cllr Hay suggested signposting the Connections Bus organisers to the fund.

### **Neighbourhood Alerts**

13/2/20: Police warning about romance fraud and how to spot the signs.

21/2/20: First 2020 edition of Our News, the e-newsletter for Neighbourhood Watch supporters.

26/2/20: Request by VISAV Limited, the UK business that built and supports the Neighbourhood Alert system, for users to take part in a survey into the value of the system.

28/2/20: Request for information about how Neighbourhood Watch supporters are supporting communities affected by flooding.

29/2 & 1/3/20: Messages from PCSO Jonathan Hall about the work of PCSOs, in particular patrols at schools. And warnings about burglaries and home security.

### **231) FDC, Street Scene, Section 106 and CCTV Updates**

Members had received copies of the latest FDC, Street Scene, Section 106 and CCTV updates (**copy attached**).

Members had been invited to visit the new CCTV control room on the 26<sup>th</sup> March and the Clerk asked if anyone was interested in attending.

### **232) Financial Officer's Report**

#### Financial Statement

Members had before them a budgetary control statement for the Revenue (Precept) Account as at 25<sup>th</sup> February 2020 showing expenditure of £267,833.77 and income of £260,544.24 (including a full year's precept income) compared with budgets, along with a bank reconciliation statement and a summary statement of reserves and funds balances.

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

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### **233) To Consider Quotations for Council's Gardening Contract & Award the Contract**

Members were reminded that the Town Council's gardening contract was up for renewal as costs and prices needed to be revisited after two years.

Members were advised at the meeting in February that letters had been sent out to three local contractors (one of them being the current contractor) inviting them to quote for the

gardening services as per the Town Council's Financial Regulations. The closing date for quotations was noon on the 24<sup>th</sup> February 2020.

Members were advised that all three contractors quoted for the works and the results are appended below: -

Contractor A	£200.00 per week Summer Duties, £100.00 per week Winter Duties. Equates to approx. £8,700 per annum. Additional duties £15.00 per hour,
Contractor B	£800.00 per week Summer Duties, additional work £50.00 per hour.
Contractor C	£606.25 per month. Equates to £7,275 per annum. Additional work £40.00 per hour (covers two operatives).

Members unanimously approved **Contractor C** to carry out the Councils Gardening maintenance contract at a cost of £7,275 per annum and £40.00 per hour for additional works. They agreed that Contractor C would provide the Town Council with a best value service because they proposed to carry out a year-round service with 53 visits to the Town, and their previous work for the Council was of a high standard. The Contract would run for 2 years with prices to be reviewed annually.

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

#### **234) Financial Review**

Members had before them a report from the Financial Officer, the purpose of which was to review the Council's financial activities, as required to be undertaken annually under the Financial Regulations, in preparation for the 2019/20 audit. **(A full copy of the report is attached to these minutes)**

Included in the report were appendices containing the Council's Risk Management Policy (Appendix A), the Council's Asset Register (Appendix B), Internal Controls (Appendix C)

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and the Council's Investments Register (Appendix D).

Members were informed that the Council's insurance arrangements were reviewed on the 4<sup>th</sup> February 2020 (Minute 211). The Financial Officer obtained a best value quotation from Ecclesiastical, through Came & Company, accepted for three years from the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020-31<sup>st</sup> March 2023.

Came & Company offered an additional free service providing a business manager on a one to one basis. The service included visits to the Council Premises advising on The Council

Asset Register, Risk Assessments, Health & Safety checks and to ensure that all Insurance compliancy procedures were being carried out by the Council.

(The detailed terms for renewal from the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020 were attached to the report.)

Members were reminded that although an annual review of effectiveness of internal audit was no longer required, it was still necessary to re-appoint an Internal Auditor annually. The Financial Officer advised Members that the current Auditor Mark Saunders had confirmed he would be prepared to complete the Internal Audit for 2020/21 for the same rate as this year therefore it was recommended that the current Auditor, Mark Saunders, be offered re-engagement for the 2020/21 audit.

It was **RESOLVED** that: -

- [ i ] the Council's Risk Management Policy (Appendix A) be noted and approved;
- [ ii ] the Register of Assets (Appendix B) be noted and approved
- [ iii ] the Internal Controls (Appendix C) be approved;
- [ iv ] Mark Saunders be offered re-engagement as Internal Auditor in 2020/21 Audit.
- [ v ] the updated Register of Investments (Appendix D) be approved.

### 235) Payment of Accounts

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

Financial Officer	Payroll March 2020	1,058.92
Clerk	Payroll March 2020	1,538.01
Pension Fund	Payroll March 2020	1,365.37
HMRC	Payroll March 2020	629.90
Zen Internet	Website Mar-Apr	10.79
Onecom	Phone Bill February	76.67
		8.39
Zen Internet	Summer Festival renewal domain name	<b>2035</b> <b>8 of 12</b>
FDC	Election Costs May 19	7,034.03
Ely & District Training Group	Rodent Control Course (Clerk)	132.00
FDC	Summer Festival Contribution	7,250.00
Flying Fysh	Council Offices Building Cleaning	40.00
Camguard Fire & Security	Replacement batteries on security system	13.86

M C G Roofing	Replacement Guttering & Fascia Boards Rear of Council Offices building	798.00
CF Corporate Finance	Quarterly payment re photocopier lease	239.95
Clerk reimbursement	Lifebuoy and fittings Little Acre Pocket Park	183.90
R Tibbitts Reim	Bunting Summer Festival	123.56
Barclays	Bank Charges	6.50
Clerk	Reim Mileage re meetings	24.30
Viking	Stationary Order	150.01
R J Warren	Little Acre Fen Tiger & Bollards	996.00
Ethos Walters	Commissioning Fee re copier	108.00
Clerk	Reim Caution signs Pond at Pocket Park	15.36
KECCA	Centrepont renewal	850.00
DL Stimson	Window Cleaner re Council Offices	165.00
Cash	Petty Cash	46.24
<b>Total</b>		<b>22,864.76</b>

### **236) To Agree Advertising Costs for Bus Services to St Ives & Peterborough**

The Clerk had obtained quotations to advertise the new monthly bus service to Peterborough (due to start on the 4<sup>th</sup> April) and the monthly bus service to St Ives. Both to be run by FACT on behalf of the Council. The quotations covered the cost of two or three adverts in the Fenland Citizen and advertising the service on-line through the Fenland Citizen.

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Cllr Petrou suggested exploring the idea of using social media with targeted audiences to advertise the services while Cllr Haggata favoured using part of the pot of money set aside for the bus services to advertise the routes in the Fenland Citizen and on line.

Cllr Petrou said he would try and get the price for the two quarter page advertisements in the Fenland Citizen reduced and this was agreed. He also agreed to look into the cost of targeted advertising on social media.

### **237) Solar Lights for Dock Road, to Consider Costs**

The Clerk had obtained quotations for the cost of solar lighting columns for Dock Road. The columns would cost £925 or £816 each Based on a rough estimate of the length of the road, the company supplying the columns estimated 31 would be needed! It was agreed to ask the company to visit the site and review their estimation.

### **238) Planning**

Cllr Haggata (Chairman) presented the minutes of the planning working group meeting held on Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> February 2020 (**copy attached**).

The group had made recommendations on planning applications a) to h) (as shown on the **appended list**). The recommendations were ratified, one further application was considered and it was agreed to return all applications to Fenland District Council marked as follows:

- a) Support
- b) Support
- c) Support
- d) Support
- e) Recommend Refusal, outside the development area and footpath along that part of London Road no longer exists.
- f) Fully Support
- g) Support
- h) Support (Cllr Gowler declared an interest)
- i) Noted

### **239) To Consider Undertaking a Neighbourhood Plan for Chatteris**

Members were reminded that at the Planning Working Group meeting on the 25<sup>th</sup> February 2020 the Clerk offered to look into the idea of producing a Neighbourhood Plan for Chatteris.

As part of that process the Clerk spoke to the Clerk of Whittlesey Town Council (who were currently undertaking such a plan) and looked back at the reasons why Chatteris Town Council decided against a Neighbourhood Plan in December 2013.

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Whittlesey formally agreed to adopt a Neighbourhood Plan for the town in 2015 and the process was still ongoing, their Clerk reported. A referendum had yet to be held and a substantial sum had already been spent on consultants, questionnaires, etc.

The Clerk attached the report which was put to Councillors in December 2013 and said many of the reasons why the Council decided in favour of a Town/Community Plan and against a Neighbourhood Plan were still valid.

As a result she **recommended** that Chatteris Town Council did not, at this stage, pursue a Neighbourhood Plan for the following reasons:

- 1) Many of the arguments put forward in 2013 still exist.
- 2) Most of the major developments planned for the town would not be subject to a Neighbourhood Plan as they are already in the planning system.
- 3) Since 2013 a Town/Community Plan has been drawn up thanks to the hard work of volunteers and costs of that plan were minimal compared to a Neighbourhood Plan.
- 4) Although it can apply for a grant, the Council is still likely to incur considerable costs if it goes down the Neighbourhood Plan route and there is no budget for such a plan.
- 5) Residents are becoming weary of and wary of the kind of questionnaires which are needed for a Neighbourhood Plan.
- 6) Fenland District Council is still against replacing the Section 106 Funding stream with CIL – a Community Infrastructure Levy.
- 7) The new Fenland Local Plan is likely to be in place long before a Neighbourhood Plan for Chatteris could be delivered.
- 8) All towns and villages are being fully consulted on the Local Plan. The previous consultation on the Core Strategy was far less robust. It is hoped the Town Council's views will be taken into account by Fenland District Council when the new Local Plan is drawn up.

Members **agreed** with the recommendations and all but Councillor Hay (who abstained from voting) agreed the Council should not undertake a Neighbourhood Plan at this time.

#### **240) Leisure and General Purposes Working Group Report & Recommendations**

Cllr Smith (Chairman) presented the minutes of the Leisure and General Purposes Working Group meeting held on 11<sup>th</sup> February 2020 (**copy attached**).

#### **241) Proposed New LHI Timetable**

Notification had been received from County Highways that the application window for LHI (Local Highways Improvement) schemes to be delivered in the 2021/22 financial year would be brought forward by two months opening on the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020 and closing on the 31<sup>st</sup> May

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2020 if approved by the County Highways' Committee. This was because currently a number of schemes were not completed within the financial year for which the funding was allocated. Changing the application period would see feasibility studies undertaken between May and September 2020, panel meetings in October and committee approval in December 2020. January to March 2021 would then be used to begin the design of the schemes for delivery from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021, making use of the better weather in the summer.

The report was noted and the Clerk asked members to consider ideas for an LHI scheme so a decision could be taken at the May meeting and the application submitted.



## **242) Traffic Issues**

Waiting Order: A copy of the letter sent out to residents notifying them that the County Council would be making a prohibition of waiting order for the whole length of Boadicea Court (from its junction with High Street) and revoking a 10m length of order in the vicinity of 53 Huntingdon Road had been received. Members made no comments on the proposals. The Clerk had also been informed that, depending upon the outcome of the public consultation and if there were no major objections, the plan was for the contractors to get the Boadicea Court work done in line with the Huntingdon Road work but there was no time frame for the works to commence.

Works: Notification had been received that the works to the roundabout on the A141 near Jack's (re-instatement of the missing blocks and replacement of the damaged combined kerb drainage system) were now underway. Signs at the roundabout were to be removed with a view to reinstalling them properly at a later date. A price was being sought for the footway works to Rosemary Lane. Costings to refresh the road markings through the High Street and the disabled bay in West Street were also being sought with the aim of undertaking the work in the warmer weather in the new financial year.

Road works: The latest bulletins listing road works & events affecting the highway had been received as had the IHMC incident report for January 2020.

Transport Strategy: Cllr Benney suggested a traffic survey of Chatteris, with a view to drawing up a transport strategy for the town, would be very helpful as the roads around the town were getting very congested and the town centre was becoming a relief road for the by-passes. In particular he highlighted the need for a third lane at the Slade End roundabout. Cllr Gowler pointed out the A142 was in a disgraceful state. Cllr French agreed to get information on how March carried out a transport strategy.

## **243) Correspondence**

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

Wenny Meadow: Cllr Benney said the application to register Wenny Meadow as an Asset of Community Value would be considered by the FDC Portfolio Holder the following Monday. The landowners had a right to oppose the ACV.

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## **244) Reports**

There were no reports.

## **245) Items for the Next Agenda**

No items were put forward for the next agenda.

