

CHATTERIS TOWN COUNCIL
LEISURE AND GENERAL PURPOSES WORKING GROUP

Minutes of a meeting held on Tuesday 17th March 2020

Present: Cllrs J Smith (Chairman), I Benney, J Carney, A Charrier, W Haggata, A Hay, P Murphy and M Petrou.

L64 19/20 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence had been received from Cllrs L Ashley, A Gowler and F Newell.

L65 19/20 Speaker: Rachael Brown, of ACRE, on the Fens Biosphere Project

Mrs Brown had sent apologies as she had been instructed not to attend due to the coronavirus crisis. She had promised to attend a meeting once the crisis was over.

L66 19/20 Filming & Broadcasting Council Meetings

The Council had received a barrage of abuse on social media following its decision not to allow a member of the public to film the March meeting of the Council, due to GDPR concerns with handling and storing the images.

As a result the Clerk and Cllr Benney had looked into the legalities of filming proceedings, the GDPR implications and ways to take the matter forward.

Cllr Benney confirmed that a member of the public had every right to film a council meeting under the Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014 and the right did not appear to be affected by the GDPR rules which came in 4 years later. Cllr Benney had been advised it was up to the person filming to ensure they did not break GDPR rules.

Councillors considered the idea of the Council setting up its own cameras and live streaming the council meetings or simply sound recording them. It was pointed out that a member of the public would be able to request any recordings under the Freedom of Information Act.

After discussing the options members agreed the best way forward would be for the Council to audio record all meetings which were being filmed/recorded by a member of the public. It was agreed to look into a digital recorder. In the meantime the Council was offered the use of CCAN's recording equipment.

The Clerk was asked to continue to look into the GDPR implications of recording meetings.

The Clerk told members it would be advisable for the Council to adopt a Recording Meetings Policy and she would adapt the policy adopted by St Ives Town Council. This was agreed.

Members then discussed two articles slating the Council, which had appeared on a Chatteris Facebook page. They appeared to be libellous and also contained swear words. It was agreed by a majority vote to pass the information to the author's employer.

L67 19/20 FDC Update

The Clerk was unsure if Mr Hughes was aware of the meeting as he had not submitted an update. Cllr Murphy confirmed FDC's contractors had begun cutting the grass at open spaces and recreation grounds but the mowers had sunk twice as the ground was saturated thanks to all the rain. He said 16 cuts would still be completed over the season.

L68 19/20 Matters Arising from the Last Meeting of the Group

L61) Electric Charging Points: The County officer advising on electric charging points had agreed to attend the April meeting of the group.

L62) Roundabout near Jacks: Cllr Hay said remedial works to the roundabout near Jacks had been completed. She had requested a meeting with the new Highways Officer for Chatteris, Mr Nick Munns, to look at certain issues.

L63) FACT Bus: In view of the coronavirus crisis there was doubt if FACT would be able to launch the new bus service to Peterborough on the 4th April. The Clerk agreed to make enquiries and if the service was to be postponed Cllr Charrier agreed to put a notice on Facebook.

L62) Bus Service Investment and Promotional Signs: The Clerk admitted she had yet to follow up the two issues but promised she would do so. Cllr Hay said she was on a bus review group at the County Council and there was a new officer looking into bus services and he was approaching the subject from a different angle.

L56) Hedging: Cllr Haggata said one of his neighbours in Juniper Drive had received a letter about the hedge backing on to Wenny Recreation Ground which informed him that work on the hedge would take place in November.

L69 19/20 Coronavirus

Cllr Haggata suggested the April Town Council meeting should be suspended in the light of the Coronavirus outbreak as the Council Chambers were a confined space.

The Clerk and Financial Officer had discussed the issue, sought advice and drawn up the following suggestion:

“In the event of public meetings being banned due to the Coronavirus outbreak, Council meetings may need to be cancelled. The Council has been advised to consider different scenarios and what actions might help mitigate any risks to the Council. This includes reviewing the scheme of delegation to ensure it is fit for purpose and would ensure minimal disruption to the work of the council.

The Clerk and Financial Officer will attempt to keep councillors updated and seek decisions via email where possible so members are requested to not only check their emails regularly but to respond to any requests for decisions.

Some matters and decisions may require delegation to the Clerk and Financial Officer in consultation with the Mayor and Deputy Mayor.

Having looked through agendas for last year's meetings the Clerk and Financial Officer have highlighted the following items which may require a decision by email or delegation:

Monthly

Planning Applications

Payment of Accounts

Traffic Matters

Emergency Repairs costing over £1,000

Time Specific

April/May: Approval of the Annual Governance Statement

Approval of Accounting Statements and Annual Return

Operation Bridges Expenditure

LHI Decision

April: Grants to Voluntary Organisations (which are time specific)

June: Re-investment of Council Assets

Internal Auditor's Report"

Members agreed to **recommend** to the full council that the suggested course of action be adopted.

L70 19/20 Little Acre Fen Pocket Park Update

Cllr Carney reported he had concreted in the housing unit for the lifebuoy near the pond and Cllr Smith said planting of hedges, etc., had taken place and the park was continuing to improve.

The Opening of the Park was scheduled for the 25th April but as this was a public gathering, which was considered unsafe, it was agreed to postpone the event and re-schedule it in the autumn.

L71 19/20 VE Day Commemorations

It was agreed to cancel the VE Day commemorations and ask Major Larke to cancel the piper booked to attend.

L72 19/20 Annual Town Meeting

It was agreed no decision could be taken on whether the Annual Town Meeting should take place on the 22nd May. The King Edward Centre, the venue, was due to close at the end of the week for an indefinite period due to the coronavirus crisis.

The following item **L73 Any Other Business** was taken **In Committee** due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.