

# CHATTERIS TOWN COUNCIL

## Minutes Dated 1<sup>st</sup> July 2025

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Minutes of a meeting of Chatteris Town Council held on Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> July 2025 at The Council Chambers, 14 Church Lane, Chatteris.

**Present:** Cllrs S Selman (Deputy Mayor), J Fuller-Gray, A Gowler, V Joyce, P Murphy and S Unwin.

### 46) Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence had been received from Cllrs L Ashley, I Benney, J Carney, A Hay, A Jones and M Siggee. Cllr C Marks also sent apologies for absence.

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

Cllr Murphy declared an interest in all planning matters and the museum, Cllr Unwin in In Bloom and Festival; Cllr Selman in Festival and the Community Car Scheme; Cllr Fuller-Gray in a planning application and Festival, Cllr Gowler in the King Edward Centre and Cllr Joyce in the King Edward Centre.

### 48) Open Forum

There were no members of the public present, so it was agreed to move on to the next item on the agenda.

### 49) Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2025 were agreed and signed by the Deputy Mayor as a correct record.

### 50) Matters Arising from the Minutes

Min 19) Land at the Sportsman: Members had received a copy of a letter from a local resident sent to FDC complaining about the illegal encampment of travellers on the field behind The Sportsman. The letter called for the two entrances to the site to be protected from illegal access and for the site to be cleansed. The Clerk said FDC had responded saying they had requested a quote to erect permanent fencing along the vehicle access points.

### 51) Police Matters

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

#### ‘Local Police

Following several complaints about the noise nuisance from a white BMW roaring around town, the Clerk corresponded with Neighbourhood Police Officer PC Zoe Pell, who was aware of the situation, and kept the Clerk updated on plans to tackle the problem.

**Neighbourhood Alerts included:**

12/6/25: Printed guidance on how to contact the police.

17 & 18/6/25: Dates for next police surgeries/community meetings at the library in Chatteris. The dates are 25<sup>th</sup> July, 11am to 12noon; 15<sup>th</sup> August, 11am to 12 noon; 20<sup>th</sup> September, 10am to 11am. Posters have been issued.'

Members were pleased to note that the police had issued posters giving details of surgery dates and suggested putting those dates on the Council's website.

Cllr Unwin spoke about a member of the public, who had been carrying out some clearance works (without permission from Highways) and had been pushing the debris down the road drains. Cllr Unwin warned this would lead to the drains being blocked and roads flooding. She also said the same man had been mentioned online for driving erratically.

## 52) FDC & Street Scene Updates

Members had received a copy of the latest FDC and Street Scene reports (**copy attached**).

Grass cutting: Cllr Carney had copied the clerk into correspondence on an issue he was pursuing with FDC, namely their failure to continue cutting an area of land at The Elms which they had put up for sale but had not been sold. Councillors were also concerned about the lack of grass cutting at Queensway which was the responsibility of Clarion.

Surplus land: FDC had also notified the Clerk that an area of surplus land at Gibside Avenue would be put up for sale by auction on the 18<sup>th</sup> June. There had been no follow up on whether the land had been sold.

Cllr Murphy: Cllr Murphy said having lost his portfolio at FDC, his roles were now being undertaken by 4 people. Cllr Unwin said FDC should inform town and parish councils about which councillor had the portfolio responsibility for every service. On behalf of In Bloom she thanked Cllr Murphy for all his support over the years.

Furrowfields Car Park: Cllr Selman said ahead of the Festival it had been requested that Furrowfields Car Park be cleared of cars. It had come to light that the person who had cars for sale stored in the car park now had 30 vehicles taking up valuable parking spaces. Councillors agreed this was totally unacceptable. Cllr Murphy explained that the cars could be parked there if they were taxed and insured. Members pointed out the owner should be paying business rates and suggested FDC should be looking into this. They also said there should be some type of time limit on the car park (similar to what operated in Ely) to stop cars being permanently parked in the car park. It was agreed to write to Cllr French, the portfolio holder at FDC.

**53) Financial Officer’s Report**

Members had before them a budgetary control statement for the Revenue (Precept) Account as at 17<sup>th</sup> June 2025 showing expenditure of £80,998.48 and income of £125,659.36 (includes a half 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.

**54) Payment of Accounts**

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

Payroll	July Payroll	8,720.72
Cllr Selman	Reim mileage	22.50
Katie Moore	Reim Mileage Summer Festival	12.60
Robert Papworth	Reim Mileage Summer Festival	12.60
R Leney	Summer Fest Entertainment services	505.00
Clerk	Reim Mileage	31.95
LD Ent	Summer Fest Entertainment services	200.00
Arco Iris	Summer Fest Entertainment services	250.00
F/O	Reim Mileage & Summer Fest sports equipment	47.56
Pro Plumbing	4x Boiler services	432.00
Chatteris In Bloom	Annual Voluntary Organisation Grant	8,600.00
Mousy Brown	Summer Fest Entertainment services	660.00
CTS Security	Maintenance re all Alarm systems for 2 Park Street	1,546.20
Vision ICT	Renewal uk .gov domain name	108.00

Vision ICT	14 emails hosting renewal	<b>2699</b> <b>4 of 9</b> 336.00
Christian Jennings Comic Book Ent	Summer Fest Entertainment services	217.50
YK Suswain-Lee	Dog show expenses	134.83
Barclays	Bank Charges	8.50
B Gas	Elec Bill 2 Park Street	236.41
Zen Internet	Jun-July Website	13.79
S Gibb	Cleaning Offices	28.00
L Provis	Summer Fest Entertainment services	350.00
Booster Cushion	Summer Fun Entertainer	384.00
B Gas	Gas Bill Church Lane	120.00
L Provis	Deposit Summer Fest Entertainer	200.00
T Payne	14B Management fee Inv 14324	72.00
All Seasons Children's Play	Annual Voluntary Organisation Grant	1,230.00
Cambs CC	Summer Reading Challenge Vol Organisation Grant	500.00
Viking	Stationary	203.86
Mayday Office Equipment	Printing photocopier	59.80
Onecom	Phone Bill 16/06/25	134.51
B Gas	Gas Bill Church Lane	72.81
J Grist	Rosettes Summer Fest	75.85
F/O	Summer Fest Float	1,500.00

F/O	Summer Fest Float repaid	<b>2700</b> <b>5 of 9</b> 1,500.00
Clerk	FLAPP, Summer Fest Reim	411.81
RPM Design & Print	Xmas Lights Repair	160.00
Clerk	Reim Sundries Summer Fest & Allotments	53.67
Wave	Water Bill Park Street	73.48
<b>Total</b>		<b>26,225.95</b>

### 55) Grants to Voluntary Organisations

Members were reminded that the Council's current policy was to consider grant applications at the Council's full council meetings. Budget limitations meant that grants given by the Council were an expression of support for an organisation and were not at a level where, on their own, they could sustain a group's financial viability. The approved budget for Voluntary Organisation grants in **2025/26 was £5,000.**

Applications for consideration by Members at the meeting were scheduled, with recommendations:

**1) Chatteris Community Car Scheme:** - £500 grant application request towards running costs. **£500 Approved.**

**2) Chatteris Foodbank delivered by Ely Foodbank:** - £1,000 grant application request towards food, fuel, and hardship fund to support Chatteris families.

Councillors requested additional information; therefore, the application was deferred to the next full council meeting.

**3) Cambridgeshire Police Shrievally-The Bobby Scheme:** - £2,053 grant application request towards helping vulnerable residents in Chatteris by installing security devices, increasing home safety, providing reassurance, and promoting wellbeing.

The grant application was received late and was therefore tabled at the meeting. It was agreed that it should be deferred until next month so more information could be requested.

### 56) Planning

Cllr Joyce, Chairman, presented the minutes of the Planning Working Group meeting held on Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> June 2025 (**copy attached**).

Members ratified the group's recommendations on applications a) to g) (as shown on the **appended list**) and considered one further application. It was agreed to return the planning applications to Fenland District Council marked as follows:

- a) Support
- b) Recommend Refusal, loss of residential amenity, height and windows have created privacy and overshadowing issues for existing dwellings. Why were these alterations not picked up by building control?
- c) Support
- d) Support (Cllr Fuller-Gray declared an interest and took no part in the decision-making process either at the planning working group meeting or at the main meeting)
- e) Support
- f) Support, request £2,000 Section 106 funding per property for the direct benefit of Chatteris.
- g) Support
- h) Recommend Refusal, To create more accesses on to the A142 is totally unacceptable. This is a red route with a proven accident record and more junctions will create more dangers. Councillors have no objections to the land being developed but are totally opposed to the proposed access to the site.

#### **57) Consultation on Local Government Reorganisation**

Members had received copies of an FDC press release and a document detailing the three options being considered as part of local government reorganisation. Under the proposals from April 2028 unitary councils would replace district, county and city councils.

The three preferred options being put forward for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough would see Fenland District Council going in with Peterborough City Council under all 3 proposals. The only question was which other councils would also be in the mix. Under proposal a) Peterborough City Council would be joined by Fenland and Huntingdonshire, under proposal b) Peterborough would be joined by Fenland, East Cambs and Huntingdonshire and under proposal c) Peterborough would be joined by Fenland and East Cambs. The other unitary authority would comprise Cambridge City Council, South Cambs District Council and possibly Huntingdonshire or East Cambs District Council.

Cllr Gowler pointed out it was inevitable that Fenland would go in with Peterborough and South Cambs with Cambridge, the only question was where Huntingdonshire and East Cambs would end up. The problem was that the new unitary authorities had to be a minimum size of 300,000 electors so there was no possibility of Cambridgeshire being split into 3 unitary authorities. Cllr Murphy said the final decision would be made by the Government.

Cllr Selman asked the Clerk to forward the link to the engagement survey and asked all councillors to complete the questionnaire about the proposals.

**58) To Consider Requesting Grant for Sportsman Field Project**

The Clerk had an article which stated that a number of the Fenland Inspire! projects which were being considered by FDC had been put on the back burner due to significant cost increases. This included the swimming pool in Chatteris, leaving Chatteris with just one project being prioritised, 'Chatteris leisure centre condition survey work' and it was pointed out that this was not an inspirational project, it was a routine maintenance survey of a relatively new building. The other Fenland towns had more significant projects included in the revised list.

It was, therefore, agreed that the Clerk should write to the leaders of FDC pointing out the Council's disappointment and anger that the swimming pool project had been dropped, pointing out routine repair works to the leisure centre should be provided under another budget and putting forward an alternative project to add to the Inspire list.

As the Town Council had already requested that the land behind the Sportsman be transferred from FDC to Chatteris Town Council, it was agreed to request a substantial grant towards developing facilities on that land. The email to point out the Town Council planned to restore the football pitch (so it could be used by youth teams), install changing rooms, toilets and a clubhouse/youth centre and look at the possibility of putting in padel courts.

**59) Leisure and General Purposes Working Group Report & Recommendations**

The minutes of the Leisure and General Purposes Working Group meeting held on the 10<sup>th</sup> June 2025 were noted (**copy attached**). There were no matters arising.

**60) Midsummer Festival Report**

Cllr Selman and the Clerk gave a brief verbal report of the Midsummer Festival, which had once again been a great success.

The weather was very hot and takings were slightly down on the previous year, probably due to the hot weather. However, those who attended really enjoyed the weekend and the Party in the Park and the family fun day on the Sunday were particularly popular. To date there had been no complaints and no trouble was reported. Officers from FDC worked closely with the Clerk and volunteers to deliver a weekend of fun, which included a flypast by a Hurricane plane.

A wash up meeting to discuss the weekend would be held and work would then begin on planning the 2026 Festival.

### 61) Summer Fun

Members had received a list of the Summer Fun shows planned in 2025. The shows were 20 years old and the only change was that the entertainment was to take place on Thursdays instead of the usual Fridays as the King Edward Centre annexe was not available due to the building works. Shows would once again be free to attend and the four acts lined up were: Booster Cushion Theatre, Jezzo, Stripey Wipey and Sammy Magic Magic.

### 62) New Food Waste Collection Proposals

Information had been received that new weekly food waste collections from households would begin in Fenland in March 2026. The County Council was running a project to recruit volunteers as part of a drive to educate residents about the new service. There was the opportunity to sign up to become a food waste volunteer.

The Government had given councils money to spend on new collection vehicles and waste containers and the aim was to take food waste to specialist facilities, instead of landfill, so it could be used to generate energy to power homes and businesses.

Cllr Murphy explained that all food waste would have to go in the new bins, it would not be allowed in the garden waste bins.

### 63) Traffic Issues

Victoria Street: Pc Chad Hall had written to Cllrs Ashley and Hay following complaints from a resident of Victoria Street about HGVs and buses continually using the road. Pc Hall said a local HGV operator had been asked to inform drivers that it was a restricted weight road, but this had had little impact. As the police were unable to be there 24/7 he asked if councillors could look into traffic calming measures. Members pointed out speeding cars were not the issue and could not think of any traffic calming measures which would have the desired effect. There were concerns that traffic calming would make matters worse. It was agreed to write back and ask what type of traffic calming Pc Hall had in mind.

Wenny Road: Another Chatteris resident had requested a permanent 20mph zone in Wenny Road as cars he claimed cars were continually exceeding the 30mph limit and were regularly overtaking outside Cromwell Community College. It was agreed the Clerk should write back and say this would be considered when all possible LHI projects were considered and to explain the LHI process.

Report It: Notification had been received that the County Council's Report It system for highways faults would be unavailable from 2pm on the 11<sup>th</sup> July to midnight on the 13<sup>th</sup>.

Report: Members had received a copy of a notice from County Highways which said it was required by the Department of Transport to produce a detailed transparency report on maintenance activities to secure additional funding. The report showed that highway maintenance in the county had increased by £35m from £24m to £59m.

Traffic Orders: Regular updates on the closures to allow repair works to Mepal viaduct bridge had been received. Notification had been received of two temporary traffic orders; one was to stop vehicles parking along part of the High Street on the 1<sup>st</sup> July to facilitate drainage and associated works and the other was to stop vehicles proceeding along Doddington Road between the 7<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> July to facilitate carriageway patching works.

Roadworks: The latest lists of planned road works in Fenland had been received, along with the TMC report for May.

#### **64) Correspondence**

Members had a list of correspondence received since the last meeting (**copy attached**). They were delighted to note that Spike Bailey had won the Community Volunteer award at the Pride in Fenland Awards. Cllr Unwin said he was so pleased to win and got a rapturous applause when he accepted the winning trophy for the In Bloom entry in the Festival parade.

#### **65) Reports**

Cllr Unwin said the judging day for In Bloom would be the 21<sup>st</sup> July. As it was the group's 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of entering the competition, four special projects were being undertaken, including the planting of giant teacups and teapots.

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

Cllr Unwin gave apologies for the next meeting.