CHATTERIS TOWN COUNCIL
Minutes Dated 2nd June 2026

Minutes of a meeting of Chatteris Town Council held on Tuesday 2nd June 2026 at The Council Chambers, 14 Church Lane, Chatteris.

Present: Cllrs L Ashley (Mayor), S Selman (Deputy Mayor), I Benney, J Fuller-Gray, A Hay, A Jones, V Joyce, P Murphy, M Siggee and S Unwin.

23) Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence had been received from Cllrs J Carney and A Gowler.

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

The Mayor declared an interest in the Festival, Museum and KEC; Cllr Selman in the Festival, WI and Community Car Scheme; Cllr Hay in the Museum, KEC and Red Tile Wind Farm; Cllr Murphy in planning, the KEC and Museum, Cllr Unwin in In Bloom and the Festival, Cllr Joyce in the KEC, Cllr Benney in planning, Cllr Siggee in the KEC and Cllr Fuller-Gray in the Festival.

25) Open Forum

Cllr C Marks was welcomed to the meeting. He said he was upset that as a district councillor for Chatteris and Manea he had not been invited to a Planning Working Group meeting which had been attended by Manea Clerk and Manea Parish Council Chairman. The meeting had been attended by Cllr Angela Johnson, from Wimblington Parish Council, who had spoken about preparing a Neighbourhood Plan.

The Mayor explained that Cllr Johnson had offered to come along and speak to the Town Council's Planning Working Group as a fact-finding opportunity. Nothing was decided at the meeting, hence the item on the agenda. Cllr Johnson had merely spoken about the amount of work involved in preparing a Neighbourhood Plan and some of the costs.

The Clerk had taken an account of all that was said at the meeting and councillors had a full report of the meeting. The Clerk and Chairman at Manea were aware of the visit and had asked to attend and the Chairman of the Planning Working Group, Cllr Joyce had agreed.

The meeting had not been opened up to other councillors on Chatteris Town Council, just those on the working group. Cllr Unwin said she had been keen for Cllr Johnson to explain the Neighbourhood Plan process after speaking to her at a Ground Up meeting.

Cllr Hay suggested in future any speakers should be invited to a full council meeting.

26) Minutes of the Previous Meetings

The minutes of the Annual Town Meeting held on the 1st May 2026 and the Annual Town Council Meeting held on the 5th May were agreed and signed by the Mayor as a correct record.

27) Matters Arising from the Minutes

Min 10) Permissive Footpath: Mr Mason had copied the Clerk into a reply he had received from Bidwells Estate Agents regarding the permissive footpath and footbridge at Carters Bridge Farm. Bidwells said a structural survey, carried out prior to the completion of purchase of the land, had identified "significant concerns" leading to the closure of the bridge on health and safety grounds. This then led to the closure of the permissive footpath The bridge and footpath would remain permanently closed.
Min 18) New Street Lighting: The County Council's Strategic Projects Manager had replied to the Clerk's email of concern about the level of lighting when the LED lantern replacement project was installed. He said the aim of the project was to maximise energy savings whilst trying to provide approximately similar lighting to that previously on the highway. The officer offered to meet on Teams to discuss the possibility of installing replacement streetlights in St Peters Drive.

28) Police Matters

Members had a report of information received from the police in the past month including the following:
Local Police
Sgt Moulton asked for the New Road resident's contact details after the resident expressed an interest in helping with a Speedwatch campaign in New Road at the May Town Council meeting. Sgt Moulton said the police were keen to encourage members of the public to join Speedwatch.
Neighbourhood Alert
5/5 & 1/6/26: Latest Fenland court results.
15/5/26: Email encouraging people to dial 999 if they witness a crime taking place.
15/5/26: Information about the new Area Commander for Peterborough and Fenland, Supt Olly Warsop.
21/5/26: Appeal for witnesses to a fatal collision on the A47 to get in touch with police.
22/5/26: Notification that the local neighbourhood team has been tackling drug dealing and vehicle related ASB. As a result, drug dealers have been arrested, illegal e-bikes and e-scooters have been seized, there have been arrests for drink and drug driving and fixed penalty notices have been issued for school related parking issues.
22/5/26: Appeal to make neighbourhoods safer by reporting empty buildings to Neighbourhood Watch.
28/5/26: Notification that two e-scooters were seized in Whittlesey and parking tickets issued to vehicles parked obstructively in York Road, Chatteris, and St Marys Street, Whittlesey.

30/5/26: Notification of the dates and venues for community meetings in Fenland in June, there are 3 in March and 2 in Whittlesey but none in Chatteris.

Cllr Unwin reported that a life-size model of David Attenborough had been stolen when it went on display in Market Hill and this followed on from the theft of a 7-foot scarecrow which belonged to In Bloom. Cllr Unwin said In Bloom would be putting out a number of other installations and she requested anyone speaking to the police to ask them to be more vigilant about the theft of models/installations.

29) Financial Officer's Report

Members had before them a budgetary control statement for the Revenue (Precept) Account as at 24th May 2026 showing expenditure of £50,723.82 and income of £156,935.96 (including 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.

30) Internal Auditor's Report

Members had before them copies of the Internal Auditor's Report and his signed certificate of the Annual Return for the year end 31st March 2026.

Members noted that the Auditor had no issues to report to the Council in respect of the Internal Control objectives A-N (as detailed on the Annual Internal Audit Report 2025/26 section of the annual return).

With regards to objective O (Assertion 10 in Section 1), Members were advised that the Internal Auditor had answered No to this question because, the Council did not fully comply with this requirement as there was no specific IT policy in place by 31st March 2026, and this was a new control objective for 25/26.

The Financial Officer had advised the Internal Auditor that the IT policy was due to be presented to Council at the meeting (at agenda item 15).

Members were also advised that the Internal Auditor had pointed out that the Council's website was a .info domain whereas the best practice guidance recommended a.gov.uk domain, therefore he recommended that consideration be given to moving the Council's website to a.gov.uk domain as soon as practicable.

The internal Auditor advised that he was not aware of any significant issues caused to the Council's operations by not fully complying with this objective by 31st March 2026.

The Internal Auditor reviewed the Council's internal controls as detailed in Appendix C of the Financial Review reported to Council on 3 March 2026, and he concluded that they were adequate for the Council's purpose and confirmed compliance with all stated procedures.

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

31) Consideration and Approval of Annual Governance Statement Part 1 (AGAR 2025/26)

Members were reminded that The Annual Governance Statement set out the assurances that Members were required to attest to in Section 1 of the AGAR 2025/26, together with qualification of each section to enable the Council to provide the required assurance over the signatures of the Mayor and the Clerk.

This was to be considered and approved in advance of the Accounting Statements (section 2 of the AGAR).

The Financial Officer made Members aware of Assertion 10, regarding effective I.T. and data management under the Proper Practices.

The management of the I.T. and data was generically included in other policies the Council had therefore it was assumed that this was sufficient. However, this year this was not acceptable and was not compliant under the Proper Practices.

Council needed a specific policy for the management of its I.T. and data and this needed to be reviewed annually along with the other policies held by the council.

This should have been put in place before 31st March 2026. Members were advised that in order to comply, the I.T. policy had been added to the Council meeting agenda for adoption and approval by Members and would then be reviewed annually.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Annual Governance Statement as detailed be noted and approved by the Members for signature by the Mayor and the Clerk prior to the approval of the accounting statements.

32) Accounting Statements and Annual Return (Part 2) AGAR 2025/26

[1] Introduction

The purpose of the report was to recommend approval of the Final Accounts for 2025/26 and to deal with the content of the Annual Governance & Accountability Return otherwise referred to as the (AGAR) for the year to the 31st March 2026 due to be submitted to the External Auditors (Littlejohn) and published on the Town Council's website by the 1st July 2026.

[2] Type of Audit

The audit for 25/26 was a section 4 Intermediate Review. This type of review included additional documents to be completed and checked by the Internal and External Auditors.

The section 4 intermediate review was required because the Council's total income and total expenditure for 2025/26 exceeded £200,000.

This was partly due to the ongoing rental income from the Church Lane flats, the NHS office space and the rent for the 1st floor of 2 Park Street along with the precept increase which was needed to cover the additional expenditure in the budget.

[3] Annual Governance Statement (Approved Separately under Agenda Item No 09)

This set out the assurances that Members were required to attest to in Section 1 of the AGAR, together with qualification of each section to enable the Council to provide the required assurance over the signatures of the Mayor and the Clerk.

This was to be considered and approved in advance of the Accounting Statements.

[4] The Accounting Statements (Section 2 of the AGAR 2025/26) attached.

The Financial Officer was required to certify and sign the document in advance of the Council meeting. The Mayor was required to sign the document after approval by the Council at the said meeting. The Accounting Statement was required to be approved after the approval of the Annual Governance Statement. The minute reference for both to be recorded accordingly.

Statement of Accounts

[a] The detailed Statement of Accounts was enclosed (Balance Sheet).

[b] The Reserves & Holding Accounts (as detailed in the statement of Reserves and funds attached) had a combined balance of £135,953.46. The internal auditor had previously advised that any holding accounts with nil or small balances should be closed.

[c] The General Fund balance increased by £6,354.22. The reasons for this was smaller underspent budgets and funds from the reserve and holding accounts were transferred into the general fund.

[5] A copy of the year end bank reconciliation was enclosed.

[6] The Internal Auditor’s Report was approved separately under Agenda item 08.

It was **RESOLVED** that:-

[i] The Accounting Statements (Section 2 of the AGAR) to be certified by the Financial Officer and endorsed by the Mayor be approved.

[ii] The detailed accounts and analyses of the Annual Return for 2025/26, as submitted, be noted and approved.

33) Payment of Accounts

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

Payroll	June payroll	6,601.87
T Payne	14A June Management Fee	72.00
T Payne	14B June Management Fee	72.00
R J Warren	Gardening Services Outdoor areas, invoice 14949	795.18

R J Warren	May Pocket Park Gardening service & additional cut	323.76
Chatteris In Bloom	Town Council Grant	8,000.00
Ricki Outis	Balloon workshop Around the World in 80 days Summer Festival	580.00
Clerk	Reim Civic duties re High Sheriff visit	48.60
KECCA	Around the World room hire	272.00
C Chubbock	Allotment annual rent	275.00
Wave	Park Street Water bill	84.49
B Gas	Elec bill Church Lane Apr	63.94
B Gas	Elec Bill Park Street Apr	194.90
Barclays	Bank Charges	8.50
Clerk	Reim Summer Festival Sundries	416.40
A Simpson	Repair water pipe joint allotments	215.00
S Gibb	Cleaning & ATM refreshments	42.00
FDC	Trade Waste	28.00
Viking	Stationary	150.97
M Saunders	Internal Audit Services	350.00
Fact Community Transport	Grant towards befriending service	250.00
B Gas	Elec Bill Park Street Apr-May	142.67
B Gas	Elec Bill Church Lane May	65.62
B Gas	Gas bill Church Lane (Apr May)	131.85
Mayday	Photocopier printing admin support, inv. 241915	64.27
Zen Internet	May-June Website	13.79
Hedley & Ellis	Xmas Lights upgrade materials	479.78
Sitebox	Xmas Lights upgrade materials	650.26
Total		**20,392.85**

34) Re-investment of Council Assets

Nationwide Building Society Business 1 Year Fixed Rate Saver Maturity

Members were advised by the Financial Officer that the Council's investment with Nationwide Building Society (£85,000 at 3.60%) would mature on the 26th June 2026.

Nationwide had advised a new reinvestment interest rate of 3.60% for a 1-year fixed term and 3.70% for a 6 months fixed term. They advised that the rates were not set in stone, however it was very unlikely that the rates would change before the maturity letter was sent out for reinvestment.

The rates offered by Nationwide were very comparable to other High Street financial institutions (rates offered range from 1.50%, 2.11%, 2.25%, 3.30% to 4%).

Some financial institutions appeared to offer higher rates, however when you read the small print these higher rates only lasted for 4 months and then the rates would be variable at much lower rates, some charged a monthly fee.

The Financial Officer reminded Members that the FSCS deposit protection limit increased on the 1st December 2025 to £120,000.

Members were advised that the Council's balances, which were made up of the general fund, and reserve & holding accounts, would allow an additional £15,000 to be reinvested, the funds would still be protected under the FSCS deposit protection scheme.

There might also be some scope in the cash flow to invest another sum of up to £40,000 in another financial institution.

The rates on some of the notice accounts were between 2.45% for a 35-day notice account - 3.50% for a 125-day notice account. The Barclays business premium rate was only 1.05%. Members were advised that the Financial Officer would need to look at the cash flow for the next 6 months to see what was viable.It would make sense to put some funds into a notice account without tying it down for a long period, this would earn more interest than the Premium account without causing any risks to accessing the funds if needed.

The Financial Officer recommended that £100,000 to be invested with Nationwide for 12 months fixed at a rate of 3.60 %. Members were advised that by rolling over the investment at Nationwide, administration costs would be kept to a minimum.

Members were advised that the funds would be protected under the FSCS whilst earning interest.

It was **RESOLVED that: -**

Members of the Council approve reinvestment of the £85,000 plus an additional £15,000 at 3.60% with Nationwide Building Society in a Business 1-year fixed rate saver account.

Members also consider and approve a sum of up to £40,000 to be invested in a notice account once the Financial Officer had looked at the cash flow to see what was sustainable.

35) To Consider Whether to Rejoin CAPALC

Members had received a copy of a letter asking Chatteris Town Council to consider rejoining CAPALC in 2026/27. The cost would be £1,516.66. The Clerk and Financial Officer advised it was not necessary to join CAPALC at the present time but that might well change in future, especially if Local Government re-organisation went ahead. It was agreed not to re-join in the current financial year but to consider including the cost of membership in the budget for 2027/28.

36) Grants to Voluntary Organisations

Members were reminded that the Council's current policy was to consider grant applications at full council meetings. Budget limitations mean 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.

Members considered one application.

1.	**Chatteris Community Car Scheme**	£500 Grant application to go towards driver refreshment costs whilst waiting for customers at hospital appointments. Plus, computer & admin costs.

Councillors sought clarification before they would make a decision. They wanted to know if the grant money would be solely used for Chatteris residents as they had been informed that drivers provided the service for residents of the surrounding villages. They also wanted to know if the Chatteris Car Scheme had applied to the surrounding villages' Parish Councils for grants and if those councils had supported the scheme

Cllrs asked for the application to be deferred to the July Council meeting while clarification was sought.

37) To Approve I.T. Policy

The Financial Officer had already made Members aware of Assertion 10 (of the AGAR), regarding effective I.T. and data management under the Proper Practices and the need to put in place an I.T. Policy

Members had before them an I.T. policy for adoption and approval to be reviewed annually.

The Financial Officer explained the importance of Council being digitally compliant and what was expected, as outlined in the policy. The I.T. policy covered all aspects of compliancy which included website accessibility and Council owned Domain emails.

Members were advised that the use of personal emails accounts for council business was strictly prohibited and that all council correspondence must be conducted through official council provided email addresses.

Emails from council-owned domains must not be forwarded to personal email addresses. Any breaches would be investigated and appropriate measures taken, in line with the councils disciplinary or governance procedures.

The Financial Officer provided sign in instructions and passwords (to be changed on sign in) to each individual councillor as a reminder of their information They were advised that if they needed help, to contact the Council's I.T. company.

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

38) Planning

Cllr Joyce (Chairman) presented the minutes of the Planning Working Group meeting held on Tuesday 26th May 2026 (**copy attached).**

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

a) Noted
b) Support
c) Support
d) Noted
e) Noted
f) Support
g) Support
h) Support
i) Support

39) Neighbourhood Plan Proposal

The Mayor said the recommendation from the Planning Working Group meeting was that the council should consider employing a consultant to give advice on how to put together a public consultation event to see if there was an appetite for a Neighbourhood Plan. The Clerk explained the main advantage of a Neighbourhood Plan was that it allowed Council's to access more CIL money (which was similar to Sec 106 payments).

Cllr Benney said FDC had looked into bringing in CIL money from developers but it was an expensive system to operate and developers could not afford to make CIL payments as land values meant developments would be unviable. Cllr Benney said Fenland needed to deliver homes. He was pleased to report that most of the homes on the Persimmon site had been sold to local people, many of them first time buyers.

Cllr Benney said the development at The Elms did not include any affordable housing because there was a need to build attenuation ponds to solve the flooding problem in The Elms. Cllr Unwin said the flooding had always been an issue because no-one maintained the existing waterways.

Cllr Benney said it was the wrong time to do a Neighbourhood Plan with no-one knowing how Local Government reform would go. Fenland was drawing up a Local Plan and this would supersede Neighbourhood Plans. He also suggested people were fed up with consultations..

Cllr Unwin argued for a Neighbourhood Plan and said it was worth putting it to the community, especially as the town did not get its fair share of investment. She was in favour of paying a consultant to arrange a public consultation event. The Clerk said Manea Parish Council had been quoted £650 for their event.

Cllr Joyce was also in favour of a consultation event to see if anyone was interested in helping with a Neighbourhood Plan.

The motion to hold a consultation event was put to the vote but was **lost** and it was agreed to look at the idea again once the issue of Local Government reorganisation had been resolved. (Cllr Jones left the meeting while the item was being discussed).

40) Leisure & General Purposes Working Group Report & Recommendations

Cllr Jones presented the minutes of the Leisure and General Purposes Working Group meeting held on the 12th May (**copy attached**).
There were no follow-ups to report.

41) Summer Fun Risk Assessment

The Clerk had drawn up a Risk Assessment for the Summer Fun shows for children which would be staged at the King Edward Centre in July and August. The Risk Assessment was approved by Councillors.

42) Midsummer Festival Update

The Clerk gave members a copy of the draft programme of activities for the 2026 Midsummer Festival which was on the theme of Around the World in 80 Days. In addition to all the organisational hours which had been put in by the Festival committee, the Clerk and FDC officer Ms Isabel Edington, a number of workshops had been organised by 20Twenty Productions in the lead up to the Festival funded by an Arts Council grant. As a result, it was hoped the parade would be the biggest and most colourful to date.

Friday 26th June

7pm	Concert by Chatteris Community Choir in Marquee at Furrowfields. Ticket price £10, includes cheese and wine. For tickets email: clerk@chatteristowncouncil.gov.uk or contact a choir member

Saturday 27th June

10am	Event Opens
10.30am	Parade Assembles in Church Lane

11am	Parade departs from Church Lane
11.30am	Parade arrives at Furrowfields Recreation Ground
	Followed by Fancy Dress Competition Judging & Presentations
12pm	Kingsfield School Choir Performance
12.20pm	BRiLL Performing Arts Group Performance
12.40pm	Raskila Lithuanian Dancers Performance
1.15pm	Arco Iris
2pm	Chinese Lion Dance
2.30pm	Generation Game with Kevin Durham
3.30pm	Emily's Maraca's Class
3.50pm	Family Fortunes with Kevin Durham
4.45pm	DJ David 'Sir Reggae' Freestone
5.30pm	Singer Laura Dennis
6.10pm	Singer Emma-Louise
6.30pm	DJ set with Laura Dennis
7.30pm	Top of the Pops Band
9.30pm	DJ set with Laura Dennis
10.30pm	Event Closes

Sunday 28th June

10am	Event Opens & Registration for Colour Fun Run and Tug of War
10am-4pm	Fenspeak Create & Share Poetry Session in Marquee
10.30am	Children's Sports
11.30am	Tug of War
12.30pm	Bricstan Band Concert in Marquee
1.15pm	Warm Up for Colour Fun Run
1.30pm	Colour Fun Run Toddlers/Family
1.40pm	Colour Fun Run 4-10 years
1.50pm	Colour Fun Run for Everyone aged 11 years and over
2.15pm	Water Fights
2.45pm	Family Disco hosted by Laura Dennis
3pm	Foam Cannon
4pm	Close

43) New Food Waste Recycling Service

Members had received a copy of a project update on the food waste recycling service which would begin in Fenland the week commencing 7th September. They also received a copy of a leaflet, which would be going out to all households, explaining which items should go in the food waste recycling, the blue bin recycling, the garden waste and the green bin waste bins. The leaflet also gave information on which items should not go in which bins.
The Clerk said she also had a leaflet listing frequently asked questions and their answers, if anyone wished to have a copy.

Cllr Benney said the Government was giving £1million funding to set up the new food waste recycling scheme and would fund the operation for the first year but after that the cost (£1m a year) would go on the council tax. The estimated 4,000 tonnes of food waste a year would go to the anaerobic digesters in St Ives. Cllr Benney said it would be the most expensive of all the rubbish collections.

44) Traffic Issues

Roadworks: The latest lists of planned road works in Fenland had been received, along with the June list of events affecting the Highways in the County and the TMC incident reports for April and May.

45) Correspondence

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

46) Reports

Cllr Unwin thanked the Town Council for the In Bloom grant. She said the Council got good value for money as In Bloom provided all year round displays. They were also enhancing areas looked after by FDC's contractors as there was little evidence they were working on those areas.

47) Items for the Next Agenda

It was agreed an update on .gov emails should be on the next agenda.