

CHATTERIS TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes 3rd March 2026

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Minutes of a meeting of Chatteris Town Council held on Tuesday 3rd March 2026 at The Council Chambers, 14 Church Lane, Chatteris.

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

213) Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence had been received from Cllrs J Carney, A Jones and M Siggee. Cllr Carney had submitted his agreement to the rental rates proposed, the idea for the Annual Town Meeting and the MBE nomination.

214) 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 and Cllr Fuller-Gray in the Festival.

215) Open Forum

Cllr C Marks was present and thanked the Financial Officer and the Clerk for their help with his submission for a grant for Chatteris and Manea Silver Band. There were no other members of the public present and it was agreed to move on to the next item on the agenda.

216) Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on the 3rd February 2026 were agreed and signed by the Mayor as a correct record. Cllr Murphy asked why members of the public who raised issues in Open Forum could not be named. The Clerk said she had been advised not to but would look into the legalities.

217) Matters Arising from the Minutes

Min 207) Public Toilets: The Clerk was pleased to report that the disabled public toilet at Furrowfields had been deep cleaned and the toilet seat replaced. A photograph showed it was looking much better. The Clerk had been assured that FDC staff were doing all they could to make the facilities as presentable as possible and a full condition survey of all public toilets had been commissioned and would be reported back to the leader and portfolio holders once complete. Cllr Hay said she had been assured that finances would be found to improve the

toilets. The Clerk had also received an email from the member of the public who had complained about the state of the disabled toilet. He was pleased to note it was much improved (although he did point out the rusty bars still needed to be replaced) and said he would be more confident to use it. He thanked the Clerk and the Mayor for their efforts on his behalf.

217) Police Matters

Sgt Pete Moulton and Pc Trev Lovitt were welcomed to the meeting. Sgt Moulton said he was in charge of the Neighbourhood policing team and Pc Lovitt and Pc Scott Clark were the police officers now covering Chatteris and Manea and they would be joined the following Monday by a new PCSO.

Cllr Hay said she was concerned that the Highway Code was not being adhered to as cars and vans were parking too close to junctions. Of particular concern was the junction of Blackmill Drove and Fairway. The Mayor said there was a similar problem in New Road, where a car parked on double yellow lines.

Pc Lovitt said he had received a complaint about noise problems in the centre of Chatteris from one lady. Cllr Unwin said there were a number of complaints on the Chatteris Cambs Discussion Facebook page. Sgt Moulton said all complaints should be reported to the police as they could only take action if a formal complaint was made and the more complaints about an area the more likely the police were to concentrate on that area.

Referring to the complaint from a resident of London Road (see the police report below), Pc Lovitt said it was a neighbour complaint which he had investigated and he had forwarded information to FDC's ASB team. He said the problems appeared to be during the day, not at night, and the yard had been quiet when he attended. He reminded members that the police were about to undertake a weekend of action on ASB driving and would be checking modified cars. Motorists were allowed to modify cars but there was a limit on the noise the cars could make.

Cllr Joyce said he had been called out the previous weekend following complaints about noise from the yard and had found a number of cars making a noise, "bombing" around the yard. Pc Lovitt said it was up the environmental services team to take action and the police could only take action if they witnessed a crime and assessed it was a risk to the public.

Cllr Joyce also mentioned the cars regularly going along the drove to the Little Acre Fen Pocket Park in the early hours of the morning.

Cllr Unwin raised the issue of builders unwilling to work on the Persimmon building site off Fenland way as they were allegedly being shot at by airguns. Pc Lovitt said he had met with the regional and site managers in early December following complaints about problems on the site, such as thefts, but unfortunately the problems were not being reported through the

correct channels and CCTV evidence was unclear. The complaints should either be reported online or by ringing 111 or, in an emergency, 999. Pc Lovitt said if the force had evidence they would take action.

Sgt Moulton and Pc Lovitt were thanked for attending the meeting.

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

Local Police

Further correspondence had been received from the resident who attended the February meeting of the Town Council to complain about horses being injured after being frightened by modified cars. The resident claimed the main culprit was now getting cars to attack his family and their animals. The Clerk passed the claims on to the police and received a lengthy reply from one of the new PCs covering the Chatteris and Manea areas, Pc Trev Lovitt. Pc Lovitt had visited both the complainant and the alleged offender and had been faced with allegations on both sides. He said FDC's ASB team were aware of the issues and had started a log. If necessary, they would fit noise devices at the complainant's home. He said there would be a weekend of action in March when any modified vehicles would be stopped and checked and ASB drivers would receive a warning. A second offence would lead to the vehicle being seized. Fixed penalty tickets would also be issued if the noise level was over the legal amount.

Neighbourhood Alerts

6/2/26: Notification that three men pleaded guilty to attending a hare coursing event and have been banned from entering private and agricultural land across England and Wales.

6/2/26: Notification that Neighbourhood officers found drugs inside a car stopped on Honeysome Road, Chatteris.

23/2/26: Notification that the Neighbourhood policing team have been tackling vehicle-related anti-social behaviour, traffic offences and drug dealing. They have also been providing a visible policing presence in town centres.

2/3/26: Latest news from the courts relating to Fenland, including the jailing of a rapist and guilty convictions for those attending hare coursing events.

218) FDC and Street Scene Updates

Members had received a copy of the latest FDC and Street Scene reports (**copy attached**). Cllr Murphy queried what was meant by the misuse of bins in the High Street.

The Clerk reported that FDC was proposing to move the newsletter to a quarterly publication from April. FDC said it was becoming increasingly challenging for officers to gather sufficient content for each edition and moving to quarterly newsletters would improve both the quality and quantity of information. It would also allow inclusion of Local Government Reorganisation updates. Cllr Unwin was not in favour but members accepted it was going to happen.

The Clerk had been copied into an email sent to FDC's environmental health team from a resident of Wenny Road complaining about the rubbish that had accumulated at the side of the commercial premises at 1 Wenny Road. The resident said it was an eyesore and prejudicial to health.

219) Financial Officer's Report

Members had before them a budgetary control statement for the Revenue (Precept) Account as at 16th February 2026 showing expenditure of £232,049.80 and income of £257,987.67 (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.

220) Grants to Voluntary Organisations

Members were reminded that the Council's current policy was to consider grant applications at 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.

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

	Organisation	Grant Application	Approved
1.	Chatteris Community First Responders	Grant towards purchase of a full kit bag with contents, defibrillator and uniform CFR'S	2000
2.	East Anglian Air Ambulance	Grant towards equipment medical equipment and PPE for the Crew.	1000
3.	Chatteris & Manea Silver Band	Grant to match fund Manea PC to provide a storage unit for the band's equipment.	1,000
4.	Community Defibrillators for Chatteris	Grant up to £1,000 for replacement pads and accessories for various defibrillators in Chatteris	1,000

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Members fully supported all the applications and it was agreed that the £2000 for the Chatteris Community First Responders grant would come out of the Defibrillators budget.

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

221) Payment of Accounts

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

Payroll	Payroll March 26	6,462.78
Barclays	Debit Charges	11.96
RFO	Reim Petty Cash	115.21
Clerk	Reim paper cups for well-being café & mileage for tip run	144.96
Viking	Stationary	297.29
KECCA	Golden Age Fair Hall Hire	150.00
Chatteris Museum	Annual Grant to Vol. Organisation	3,500.00
UK Tool Hire	Xmas Lights diesel for hire of platform	2.94
UK Safety Management	Pat Testing	333.84
Hedley & Ellis	Xmas Lights upgrade	316.09
R J Warren	Clear rubbish from allotments	72.00
S Gibb	Council offices cleaning	28.00
Clerk	Reim Rat poison, cups & mileage	113.96
Youth of Fenland	Detached youth work sessions	351.00
Iris	Staffology software payroll monthly charge Jan	31.20
Iris	Staffology software payroll monthly charge Feb	46.80

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Mayday	Photocopier printing and connectivity support	49.48
CP Property Maintenance	Shower screen supply & fit, Flat 14A Church Lane	185.49
Bgas	Electricity bill 2 Park Street	352.30
R J Warren	Little Acre Park Maintenance	137.52
Fore Group Solution	Village Scene advert	1,064.40
The Lock Shop	New Lock for side entrance door to flats at 14 Church Lane	263.50
St John Ambulance	Provision of first aid at Xmas Lights switch on	343.20
Zen Internet	Summer festival Renewal Domain Name	14.39
FDC	CCTV Maintenance contract	14,146.68
Zen Internet	Feb-March website & CTC Renewal Domain Name	35.38
Onecom	Telephones, Inv.7764270	135.34
T Payne	Management Fee Flat 14B, Mar 26 Inv. 16362	72.00
T Payne	Management Fee Flat 14A, Mar 26 Inv. 16361	72.00
Total		28,849.71

222) Financial Review

[1] Members were reminded that the purpose of the report was to review the risks that faced the authority - to include financial & activities risks – and to show that the authority had taken the appropriate steps to manage all risks, as required to be undertaken annually under the Financial Regulations Clause 1.5, prior to approving the Annual Governance Statement and in preparation for the 2025/26 audit.

[2] Financial Regulations

The Financial Regulations were reviewed and approved by resolution at the 7th October 2025 full council meeting and revised regulations were published. (Min 116). The Town Council adopted CAPALC/NALC's Model Financial Regulations – (The England updated version April 2024).

[3] All Risk Management Policy

Members were reminded that The Council approved and adopted a new Strategic Risk Assessment Management Policy at the full council meeting held on the 7th October 2025 (min 120), along with an updated Data Protection Policy, General Privacy Policy, and a Document Retention & Disposal Policy with a list of documents for retention & disposal. These policies to be reviewed annually and approved and noted at the full council meeting.

[4] Insurances

The Financial Officer advised Members that the previous long-term agreement policy of 3 years was due for renewal as at the 31st March 2026 as Members approved a 3-year long term policy with Zurich Municipal at the February 2023 Council meeting. (min. 198).

See following minute (223) for decision on renewal.

[5] Protection of Assets

A copy of the Council's Register of Assets was attached.

Members were reminded that the value of assets was not contained in the balance sheet, they were just listed as a memorandum item in the supporting information. It had been discussed and previously agreed with the internal auditor that it was not necessary to pay a District Valuer for a re-valuation of any assets unless the Council intended to sell the assets.

Since then, the insurance company had advised that they would require a professional valuation of both 14 Church Lane and 2 Park Street once the refurbishment works were completed and a rebuild property valuation was carried out on the 4th March 2025. The valuation of the two properties was noted and the insurance company was advised of the new valuation figures. The insurance was amended accordingly to include the increase of both the properties rebuild valuation figures.

The street furniture, office equipment, fixtures, fittings, and contents were updated annually for insurance purposes.

[6] Internal Controls

The new Financial Regulations 2024 had been approved under resolution by Members at the October 2025 meeting. It was therefore no longer necessary for it to be included as a separate appendix in the Financial Regulations. The Internal Controls were reviewed every year under the financial review.

They were revised due to the renewed approval of the use of Bacs, Chaps, variable direct debits & standing orders for process of payments. Under the Financial Regulations this approval has to be renewed by resolution of the council at least every two years. This renewal was approved at the October 2025 full council meeting (Min 117).

[7] Internal Audit

Under current regulations, an annual review of effectiveness of internal audit was no longer required. It was, however, still necessary to re-appoint an Internal Auditor annually. The current Auditor, Mark Saunders, had confirmed he was willing to carry out the internal audit for 2025/26.

[8] Investments

The Council's Register of Investments, including yields, was attached.

At the full council meeting held on 3rd June 2025 (Min 35) Members of the Council considered and **approved** reinvestment of £85,000 with Nationwide Building Society at 3.60% fixed for 1 year.

[9] Risk Assessments

Members were reminded that all risk assessments were carried out by the Clerk on a needs basis for all events organised by the Town Council. On completion of these Risk assessments they would be noted, approved and minuted by The Full Council at the relevant monthly full council meeting.

[10] It was RECOMMENDED that: -

- [i] the Council's Risk Management Policy) be approved;
- [ii] the Register of Assets be approved;
- [iii] the Internal Controls be noted & approved;
- [iv] Mark Saunders be offered re-engagement as Internal Auditor for the 2025/26 audit;
- [v] the updated Register of Investments be approved.

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

223) To Agree Insurance Provider

Members were advised that the Council's Insurance policy was due for renewal on the 1st April 2026. The current insurance policy was with Zurich Municipal, under a three-year contract which would reach full term on the renewal date.

Members were advised that the Financial Officer had sought and received renewal quotations from Zurich & AJG Community Schemes, Insurer Hiscox as listed below.

The Financial Officer advised that she had also requested quotations from two other insurance companies who specialised in Town & Parish Council insurance.

	3 Year contract	Annual
1) Zurich Municipal	£3,304.08	£2,993.15
2) Hiscox Insurance	£4,977.61	£4,977.61
3) Clear Councils	Non-Return	
4) Norris Fisher	No longer provide Town Council Insurance	

Zurich's quotation showed a saving of £311 per annum for the 3-year contract option compared to the 1 year, with a commitment to freeze the rates which were applied to the sums insured or indemnity levels which were used to calculate the annual premium.

Hiscox Insurance did not offer a long-term discounted option price.

The Financial Officer advised that Zurich Municipal's 3-year option offered savings of £1,984.46 per annum compared to Hiscox's quotation. Zurich had always given the Council a best value service, therefore on this basis the Financial Officer recommended that Council **Approve** a 3-year contract with Zurich as this option offered a best value quotation to the Council.

It was **RESOLVED** that the report be noted and the 3-year contract with Zurich approved.

224) To Agree Rental Rates for 2026/27

The Clerk reported that the rental rates for all the properties owned and leased out by the Town Council were currently up for renewal.

Having consulted with the letting agents for 14a and 14b Church Lane, it appeared that rental prices had only increased slightly in the past year. As the current tenants were reliable, made prompt payments and, according to three monthly inspections, were keeping their flats in good condition, it had been agreed that the rental rates should remain the same - £1,000 per month.

The rental rate for the first floor of 2 Park Street was currently £1,000 a month and the NHS vaccination team paid £5,000 a year for the two rooms they occupied at 14 Church Lane.

The **recommendation** was that all rental rates should remain the same for 2026/27 as all were good, reliable tenants.

Members **agreed** that rental rates for 2026/27 should remain the same.

225) Planning

Cllr Joyce (Chairman) presented the minutes of the Planning Working Group meeting held on the 24th February 2026 (**copy attached**).

Members ratified the group's recommendations on applications a) to d) (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) Support
- c) Support
- d) Recommend Refusal. The development is out of character with the area and has an adverse impact on neighbouring properties and the open countryside. There are also

issues with the amount of traffic on the road and there is no footpath. The application is contrary to policies LP15 and LP16.

- e) This appears to be a completely new plan and a new planning application should be submitted, not a variation of conditions.

The Clerk reported that an application to place a Tree Preservation Order on a Eucalyptus tree at 23 Station Street was to be considered by FDC's planning committee the following day. The tree officer wished to make the TPO as there had been a previous application to fell the tree which had been refused as the tree officer said the tree was prominent in the street scene with high amenity value and there was no valid justification to fell it. Members agreed with the TPO.

226) Leisure and General Purposes Working Group Report & Recommendations

The Mayor presented the minutes of the Leisure and General Purposes Working Group meeting held on the 10th February 2026 (**copy attached**).

L37) Annual Town Meeting: Members agreed with the idea that the annual town meeting on the 1st May should be on the theme of 'Celebrating our Volunteers' and the Council should ask local groups to nominate an unsung hero, who would receive a certificate.

L38) In Bloom: Cllr Unwin said In Bloom were not taking over the Market Hill Gardens, they had merely sought permission from FDC to do some work there. FDC would still be responsible for maintenance of the gardens. Cllr Unwin also asked if a map of Chatteris could go on the interpretation board in the Parish Church grounds.

Other matters: The Mayor said she had asked the RBL to take down the poppy cascade. She asked for an official request to go them.

The problems associated with mobility scooters was discussed and it was pointed out that it was recommended they drive near to the kerb but this was not possible due to the condition of the roads.

There were also complaints about lorries carrying straw littering the streets but it was pointed out they had no option but to use Huntingdon and London Roads. However, Cllr Unwin argued they were often stacked too high.

227) To Consider Supporting MBE Nomination

Members had received a copy of the citation nominating Mr Chris Savill, the Chairman of Chatteris Christmas Lights Committee, for an MBE. All but one of the members agreed to sign a letter of support for the nomination. The abstaining member pointed out there were a lot of people who also worked hard for the town.

227) Sportsman Playing Field Update

The Mayor had written again about progress on the transfer of the Sportsman playing field to Chatteris Town Council. In particular, she was concerned by reports that FDC might be planning to sell the field.

Cllr Ashley had been assured by FDC's Principal Estates Surveyor that the field was not being considered for development and was not on any phase of FDC's disposal programme

He said he was now confident that the recreation ground boundaries had been clarified, following ongoing discussions with the owners of the Sportsman bar. He now needed to get a Land valuation and there would need to be a covenant on any transfer to retain the land for social/recreational uses. Once the valuation was in place he would work up Heads of Terms for the transfer, seek agreement on these with the Town Council and then get approval for the transfer from FDC members. He hoped to be in a position to go ahead with a transfer in the new financial year.

Members welcomed the update.

228) Local Government Reorganisation

Members had received a copy of the latest proposals for Local Government Reorganisation in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. Another consultation was being undertaken on four proposals.

The four were:

- 1) North Cambridgeshire and Peterborough – Peterborough, Huntingdonshire, East Cambridgeshire and Fenland.
Greater Cambridge – Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire.
- 2) North West – Peterborough, Fenland and Huntingdonshire.
South East- Cambridge, East Cambs and South Cambs
- 3) North East – Peterborough, Fenland and East Cambs.
Central Huntingdonshire – Huntingdonshire
South West – Cambridge and South Cambs
- 4) Greater Peterborough – Peterborough and 9 wards from Huntingdonshire
Mid Cambridgeshire – Fenland, East Cambs and 17 wards from Huntingdonshire
Greater Cambridge – Cambridge and South Cambs

Proposal 4 had been put forward by Peterborough City Council and Fenland District Council and it was unanimously agreed to support this option as the best for Chatteris.

229) Traffic Issues

Town Centre Roadworks: Notification had been received of two weeks of roadworks in Bridge Street and High Street starting on the 16th March to allow for carriageway resurfacing works. A diversion route via Fenland Way was shown. Enquiries by a resident revealed that the works would be phased in sections, no parking cones would be used, access would always be maintained at one end of the Furrowfields/Lode Way estate, works preventing access to Aldi would be tailored to meet opening times but the petrol station would be cut off for a short period. Pedestrian access would be maintained along the footways and the bus companies had been informed about the works.

Disabled Parking Bay: The Council had been consulted about the removal of a disabled parking bay in West Street which was no longer required. Members had no objections to the removal.

Emergency Works: The Clerk had been informed that County Highways were looking into emergency works carried out by Anglian Water on Fenton Way which caused significant disruption on the A141 and A142 during the morning peak traffic period on the 25th

February. Discussions with Anglian Water were taking place to confirm whether the works met the statutory definition of emergency works.

New Road: The Council had been copied into a complaint from a resident of New Road about the deteriorating state of the road surface outside his home. The complaint had gone to County Highways.

TROs: The Council had been informed of planned drainage investigation works in Eden Crescent which were due to take place on the 27th February. Carriageway resurfacing works were also planned in Stocking Drove (there was no firm date for the works) and in Birch Avenue and Birch Close ((due to take place on the 14th April).

Proposal: Members had a copy of an email sent by a local resident with suggestions for addressing “persistent Highway Code breaches” in the centre of Chatteris. The resident had requested the proposals be added to the agenda and considered as a priority for an LHI. The proposals were for a build out at the High Street/Old Auction Yard junction to force non-priority traffic behind a physical barrier, a one-way system in New Road to prevent traffic from the High Street proceeding up New Road past the funeral parlour and a Stage 1 Road Safety Audit. The author suggested that by failing to act on his warnings about problems in the area the Council risked being in breach of its statutory duty of care. The Clerk had written back explaining the LHI system and had pointed out the Council would not be in breach of any statutory duty as it was not responsible for the Highways, that was the responsibility of Cambridgeshire County Council. Members agreed they would not be carrying out an audit and pointed out the grave dangers of a one-way system in New Road. They explained that a one-way system would result in a major increase in the amount of traffic using the dangerous junction of New Road and the Isle of Ely Way and would force more traffic on to a red route.

Roadworks: The latest lists of planned road works in Fenland had been received.

230) Correspondence

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

CCTV: Cllrs Joyce and Unwin offered to represent the Council at the CCTV liaison group meeting on the 16th April.

Coffee Morning: Cllr Fuller-Gray requested draw prizes for the Mayor’s coffee morning on the 17th April.

231) Reports

In Bloom: Cllr Unwin reported that the new Chairman of Chatteris In Bloom was Mr James Green.

August Council Meeting: The Clerk said she would be on holiday on the date of the scheduled August meeting and she asked if the meeting could be put back a week to the 11th August. This was agreed.

232) Items for the Next Agenda

No items were put forward for the next agenda.

