

CHATTERIS TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes 2nd September 2025

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Minutes of a meeting of Chatteris Town Council held on Tuesday 2nd September 2025 at The Council Chambers, 14 Church Lane, Chatteris.

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

86) Apologies for Absence

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

87) 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 Unwin declared an interest in In Bloom and Festival; Cllr Selman in Festival and the Community Car Scheme; Cllr Fuller-Gray in the Festival, Cllrs Joyce and Siggee in the KEC; Cllr Hay in the Museum and KEC.

88) Open Forum

There were no members of the public present but Cllr C Marks asked for information on how Chatteris and Manea Silver Band could apply for a grant towards the cost of a storage container. The Financial Officer said she would forward the grant form. Cllr Marks also confirmed that a date would be set for a joint meeting between the villages and Chatteris to discuss the new reservoir.

89) Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 5th August 2025 were agreed and signed by the Mayor as a correct record.

90) Matters Arising from the Minutes

Min 69) Open Forum: Cllr Unwin asked if there had been any updates on the Gibside Avenue land issue. The Clerk said the matter was ongoing and appeared to be going through official/legal channels with one resident asking for information from the Freedom of Information Officer.

Min 72) CCTV Camera: As promised Cllr Carney had enquired about the CCTV camera in Wenny Recreation Ground, the officer responsible had confirmed that the camera was faulty due to a local radio issue but arrangements were in progress to address the issue. As that

message was sent at the beginning of the month, the Clerk was hopeful the problem was now resolved.

Min 75) Payment of Accounts: Cllr Selman queried the payments to CARC and the Christmas Lights committee and these were explained by the Financial Officer.

91) Police Matters

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

Local Police

No updates had been received.

Neighbourhood Alert

6/8/25: Update from the Local Neighbourhood team stating they tackled illegal parking and issued tickets in areas including the High Street in Chatteris. They also stated that anti-social behaviour in Chatteris, March and Whittlesey town centres was a priority for the team.

6/8/25: Notification that the local officers attended the Town Council meeting and one concern raised was that the speed humps were being used as zebra crossings, putting pedestrians at risk.

11/8/25: Notification that a new team had been set up, the Spree Offender Team, to target some of the most prolific offenders in Fenland and Peterborough. The team made 25 arrests in its first month.

13/8/25: Notification of further parking tickets issued to illegally parked vehicles in Chatteris town centre.

21/8/25: Notification that residents raised concerns about parking issues and speeding motorists at the recent community meeting in Chatteris.

1/9/25: Information about a bike marking event at Chatteris Aldi on the 9th September from 10am to 12pm.

1/9/25: Dates for September community meetings with the police. The Chatteris meeting to be held on Saturday 20th September from 10am to 11am at the Library.

1/9/25: Latest edition of Our News, the Neighbourhood Watch e-newsletter.

92) FDC & Street Scene Updates

Members had received a copy of the latest FDC and Street Scene reports (**copy attached**). The Mayor reported dog fouling in New Road was a serious problem and she would be contacting the Street Scene officer.

93) Financial Officer's Report

Members had before them a budgetary control statement for the Revenue (Precept) Account as at 16/08/ 2025 showing expenditure of £115,341.45 and income of £138,115.15, (included a half year's precept income) compared with budgets, along with a bank reconciliation statement and a summary statement of reserves and funds balances.

Empress Swimming Pool

The Financial Officer had been approached regarding a grant towards repairs to the Empress swimming pool. She had been informed that the owners had spent money repairing the pool and were hoping to re-open it in October.

They had started a GoFundMe page and had raised about £1,800, however, there was still a shortfall which was needed to complete the works before the pool could be re-opened.

The Financial Officer advised Councillors that there were some funds available in the Leisure Reserve account, but she would need a grant application form completing and would need figures and facts. It would then go on the agenda for October's full council meeting to be considered; as it was a financial matter it would need its own agenda item so a decision could not be made at the current meeting.

Cllrs Unwin & Selman spoke in favour of the project, pointing out they were confident that the community would support money being spent to help re-open the pool which has been, and still was an important asset to the town. Many generations had learned to swim there and lessons would continue.

The Clerk advised that in the past FDC had given grants to the pool but had stopped because at that time the pool was in a financial position where it did not need the money.

Although the pool was privately owned, it was run by volunteers and trustees, therefore should meet the criteria for a grant. The Financial Officer advised that she would send a grant application out and add this to October's agenda.

Councillors agreed to look into the matter further and that it should be added to October's agenda.

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

94) Payment of Accounts

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

Payroll	September Payroll	6,462.78
British Gas	Park Street Electricity	241.34
Wave	Park Street Water bill	99.09
The Bobby Scheme	Vol Org Grant	500.00
Mayday	Photocopier printing	15.02
Zen Internet	Website Aug/Sep	13.79

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T Payne	14A Management fee invoice no14969 Sep	72.00
Festive lighting	Xmas Lights new lighting	603.00
Barclays	Debit Charges	9.70
F/O Reim Re Alan Simpson	Repair/replace allotments Water pipe & tap North Side	90.00
Clerk	Summer Festival sundries	46.00
R J Warren	Gardening services open spaces	772.03
R J Warren	Little Acre gardening services	137.52
F/O	Reim Shed at KEC for Peter Pan	629.99
T Payne	14b Management fee Inv. 14795 Aug	72.00
T Payne	14b Management fee Inv. 14795 Sept	72.00
Onecom	Phone bill Inv. 7656771	134.51
S Gibb	Cleaning Council offices	28.00
Morning WI	Grant vol organisation Chatteris Morning WI	500.00
Arulandu Ltd	Flooring re KECCA	4,995.60
F/O	Reim Petty cash	36.49
Total		15,530.86

95) External Auditors Report

The Financial Officer advised Members that she had not received the External Auditors report back yet so was unable to give them copies of the completed certificate and Section 3 Agar document.

She advised that she had chased PKF Littlejohn (External Auditors) to see why she had not received the documents back only to be told that there was a breakdown of communication between their teams internally; they apologised for the lack of communication.

They advised that the report would be completed and sent in time for the documents to be put on public display before the 30th September, which was the cut-off date.

The FO questioned the fact that the report was normally approved by Council before it went on public display and they advised that it could be approved retrospectively.

They also advised that there would be an Except for Matters on the report because the Financial Review, risk assessment did not include operational risks.

The FO explained to them that operational risk assessments were carried out as required.

They advised that each risk assessment should be approved and minuted, failing that an operational risk assessment should be reviewed annually and approved and minuted accordingly.

The risk assessment had never been a requirement for the external audit before, which explained why the matter had not been raised in previous audits.

The Financial Officer advised Members that if this was addressed before next year's audit it would not be an issue going forward.

Members were advised that there would be an Operational Risk Assessment policy added to the October meeting agenda for approval.

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

96) Planning

Cllr Joyce (Chairman) presented the minutes of the Planning Working Group meeting held on Tuesday 19th August 2025 (**copy attached**). Cllr Unwin asked for her name to be added to the list of those who had sent apologies for absence.

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

- a) The Town Council's original comments still stand. 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? The Council is also in agreement with the concerns raised by the neighbour.
- b) Support
- c) Support
- d) Support
- e) Support
- f) Support
- g) More information required – Cllr Unwin said the poles were already in.
- h) Support
- i) Support
- j) Support

- k) Noted
- l) Support
- m) Support

97) Meeks Cemetery Complaints

The Clerk had been contacted by two members of the public with very different ideas about how Meeks Cemetery should be maintained. She explained it was FDC's responsibility to maintain the area.

The first person, who did not live in town, had complained to FDC about the deteriorating state of the cemetery stating the site was "overwhelmed by unmanaged bramble growth which was obscuring memorials". The gentleman argued that it was distressing to families and undermined the dignity of those interned and the heritage value of the site. Mr Kevin Wilkins, FDC's open spaces manager, said the cemetery was maintained primarily for wildlife and FDC followed a management plan put in place by the Wildlife Trust several years ago. The lawned area at the front was kept clear, with pathways cut through the site. He sent over a copy of the Wildlife Trust plan. The gentleman was not convinced and argued there should be a more balanced approach which honoured both the ecological responsibility and the cemetery's role as a place of respectful remembrance.

A resident pointed out the cemetery was a wildlife refuge and was packed with biodiversity. He supported keeping the main avenue passable but felt the grassed areas were cut too frequently (once a fortnight) and this disturbed plants and invertebrates. He was also against cleaning and repairing older gravestones and monuments. He was in favour of keeping the "wildlife oasis" as Chatteris was losing many of its unstructured green spaces to developments.

The Mayor agreed that the war graves should be kept tidy as should the area at the front and the footpath through the site, which needed to be cleared of saplings growing from existing trees. However, she acknowledged that the area was teeming with wildlife and was a fascinating place to visit so the rear of the site should be left in a wild state. Cllr Unwin said the graves had been cleared by volunteers in the past and she was confident it would be possible to clear the war graves again. She pointed out it was a peaceful place.

It was agreed that the needs of those visiting graves and the wildlife needed to be balanced. The war graves should be accessible, the main avenue cleared of saplings and the fortnightly cutting schedule should be maintained but other areas should be left in their wild state. It was suggested the Wildlife Trust report might need updating.

98) LHI Application

The Clerk said she was still waiting to hear if the Council's application for an LHI grant for 25/26 had been successful but in the meantime she had expressed an interest in applying for another grant in the 26/27 application round.

The Council had received a number of requests for schemes to be considered for the next round of funding and these were:

Extending the 30mph speed limit zone in London Road to Ferry Hill;

A permanent 20mph speed limit in Wenny Road (not just school times);

Traffic calming measures in Victoria Street, such as speed humps, and a 20mph speed limit;

Double yellow lines in New Road to protect the entrance to 36A New Road;

Double yellow lines in George Way.

In addition, the Clerk suggested signs warning that pedestrians could be crossing the A142 bypass at the rear of the Travis Perkins site in Dock Road and over to the South Fens Business Centre site.

With regards to Victoria Street, members pointed out it was not possible to travel at more than 20mph along the street due to the parked cars and they feared traffic calming measures such as speed humps would cause even more damage to old buildings.

Whilst members were not opposed to the idea of warning signs for the pedestrian crossing, it was suggested Aerotron might have had a condition of planning to put in measures to aid safe crossing of the A142. The Clerk agreed to investigate.

Cllr Fuller-Gray asked about a footpath along London Road to Seasons Garden Centre, which she believed would be well used. The Clerk explained it was outside the remit of the LHI scheme but Cllr Fuller-Gray had ideas on how the footpath could be funded and was advised to approach Highways about using the grassed verge.

99) Cars Parked in Furrowfields Car Park

The Council had received an email from the member of the public complaining about the cars permanently parked in Furrowfields car park which did not belong to residents. The matter had been reported to Fenland District Council, who had explained the time limit signs were not enforceable. The resident argued people visiting Chatteris deserved better parking and the car park should not be used as business premises.

The email had been forwarded to FDC and the Clerk said she would follow it up and ask for answers.

100) Traffic Issues

Members had received the following notes from the Clerk of a meeting she attended along with two County Highways Officers and County Councillor Daniel Divine on the 7th August:

Purpose of meeting: To consider project for footway improvements at Dock Road & Prospect Way.

Plan: To extend the existing footpath in Dock Road round the corner into Prospect Way. After a short distance the footpath would give way to painted signs on the road showing where pedestrians should walk as there are so many entrances/car parking spaces that a continuous footpath is not possible.

Discussion: The Clerk explained Town Council was not opposed to the idea and welcomed any investment by Highways but their major issue was the lack of street lighting in Dock Road. Many residents had complained and there were concerns that extending the footpath/cycleway would only encourage more people to walk and cycle along there to the businesses in the area, including Travis Perkins. The main concern expressed by residents was that on dark afternoons and evenings, lorries, vans and cars were continually using Dock Road and they did not feel safe. Cllr Divine confirmed he had also received complaints. The officers took the concerns on board.

The group also looked at the footpath/bridleway behind Travis Perkins which led to the bypass. The track was overgrown (one of the officer's said he would report that) but did lead to the safest place to cross the A142 bypass (to the businesses on the other side, including the South Fens Business Centre). However, it could not be deemed safe as motorists were speeding along the road and there were no warning signs that pedestrians could be crossing in the area. The Clerk suggested the Town Council might consider making an LHI application for warning signs similar to those installed on Fenland Way.

TTRO's: Notification of a proposed Temporary Traffic Regulation Order to enable works on behalf of City Fibre. Temporary Prohibition of Traffic Orders had been granted for: Part of London Road to facilitate drainage and associated works on the 22nd & 23rd October; part of High Street to facilitate telecommunication duct installation between 27th and 30th October; Ash Grove, Bridge Street, Furrowfields Road, High Street and Railway Lane to facilitate carriageway resurfacing works between the 1st and 12th September; Fairbairn Way to facilitate new gas, water and electrical connections between the 6th October and 5th November; part of Station Street to facilitate sewer repairs between the 10th and 14th November; Birch Avenue and Birch Close to facilitate carriageway surface treatment works (dates unknown). A temporary 40mph speed limit was planned along Fenton Way to facilitate gas mains and electrical duct laying (dates unknown).

Notifications: The August newsletter regarding the implementation of the new asset management system, Aurora had been received as had the latest lists of planned road works in Fenland and the Highways events diary dates for August and September.

101) Correspondence

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

Council of the Year: The Council had been invited to submit an application for Council of the Year. The email had pointed out all the works carried out by the Council and suggested it was worth submitting an application Members asked the Clerk to complete the application form.

Town Bowls Club: Cllr Hay offered to look into the Bowls Club's appeal for help.

Reservoir: Cllr Ashley said the reservoir team was due to hold another consultation event in November.

102) Reports

Cllr Unwin said she would be attending the In Bloom awards ceremony on the 4th September.

103) Items for the Next Agenda

To consider a grant for the swimming pool and to accept the External Auditor's report.