

# **CHATTERIS TOWN COUNCIL**

## **Minutes Dated 1<sup>st</sup> September 2026**

**2852**

**1 of 9**

Minutes of a meeting of Chatteris Town Council held on Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> September 2026 at The Council Chambers, 14 Church Lane, Chatteris.

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

### **88) Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence had been received from Cllrs J Carney, M Siggee and S Unwin. Cllr C Marks also sent apologies for absence.

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

Cllr Hay declared an interest in the Museum and the King Edward Centre. Cllr Murphy declared an interest in planning, the KEC and the Museum; Cllr Ashley in the KEC, Museum and Festival; Cllrs Joyce and Jones in the KEC and Cllr Selman in the Festival and the Community Car Scheme.

### **90) Open Forum**

Cllr D Divine was present but did not wish to speak in the Open Forum.

### **91) Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

The minutes of the Town Council meeting held on Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> August 2026 were agreed and signed by the Mayor as a correct record.

### **92) Matters Arising from the Minutes**

Min 83) Schools Superzone Funding: The Clerk had advised the County Council officer responsible for the School Superzone funding that the Council was fully behind an application for funding to refurbish the mural on the underpass to Tesco's. The officer had requested sight of the criteria which had to be met for the mural to be agreed by the owners of the underpass, the County Council. She also said she would like local schoolchildren to be involved in shaping the artwork and the intention was to work with them once they returned to school. She asked how the risk of vandalism could be reduced. The Clerk had explained that the more the children were involved in the mural the less the likelihood of vandalism and she pointed out the boxers' mural in the bus stop had not been vandalised.

Min 76) Road Closures Quote: The Clerk had finally received a second quote to close the roads for the Remembrance Sunday parade and wreath laying ceremony. The quote was half

the price of the original quote at £1,607.50 plus VAT and it was, therefore, **agreed** to accept the new quote and employ Phoenix Events (East) Ltd to carry out the road closures.

### 93) Police Matters 1

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

#### **Local Police**

The Clerk reported the destruction of two bollards at the Old Railway Line Footpath and Little Acre Fen Pocket Park to the police via the online reporting system and received a reference number.

#### **Neighbourhood Alert**

12/8/26: Update from the March Neighbourhood Policing Team (**attached**).

25/8/26: A reminder of the laws around e-scooters after four e-scooters were seized in Peterborough and Fenland. They can only be legally used on private land with permission.

27/8/26: Thanks to a caller who took four caring and kind steps to make sure an elderly man was returned safely to his Fenland home.

28/8/26: Invitation to residents of Fenland to share their views on crime and anti-social behaviour in the local area with the Fenland Community Safety Partnership.

31/8/26: Information about community meetings in September including one at Chatteris Library from 2pm to 3pm on the 29<sup>th</sup> September.

The Clerk said a car had deliberately rammed one of the bollards along the Old Railway Line and another bollard leading into the pocket park. She had reported the incident to the police and had a crime number. Fortunately, the car responsible for destroying the bollards had clearly been damaged. The Financial Officer said the council's contractors had been asked to put in larger bollards set deeper into the ground.

### 94) Financial Officer's Report

- (1) Financial Statement - Members had before them a budgetary control statement for the Revenue (Precept) Account as at 24<sup>th</sup> August 2026 showing expenditure of £134,675.11 and income of £178,429.65 (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.
- (2) Members were advised that the National Joint Council for Local Government Services had agreed the new pay scales for 2026/27 to be implemented from 1 April 2026. The settlement provided a 3.3% increase in pay rates and allowances.
- (3) FACT had advised that the current provision for providing the Friday bus around Chatteris would run out of funds at the beginning of October. They had confirmed the service was still very popular and the Clerk had notified them that the Council had budgeted to keep the service going and said they should invoice the Town Council in future.

Cllr Selman said she had pointed out to the Mayor of the Combined Authority that most of the Tiger buses around Chatteris were empty or parked up. Cllr Murphy said most service buses were empty or virtually empty.

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

### 95) Payment of Accounts

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

|                |                                            |          |
|----------------|--------------------------------------------|----------|
| Payroll        | September payroll                          | 7,696.79 |
| T Payne        | 14B Management Fee<br>September            | 72.00    |
| T Payne        | 14A Management Fee<br>September            | 75.60    |
| S Gibb         | Offices Cleaner                            | 42.00    |
| UK Tool Hire   | Xmas Lights, hire of<br>versalift          | 456.00   |
| FDC            | Trade Waste collection                     | 36.75    |
| Festive Lights | Xmas Lights, New LED star<br>topper lights | 669.42   |
| RJ Warren      | Pocket Park grass cutting,<br>maintenance  | 161.88   |
| RJ Warren      | Open Spaces grass cutting,<br>maintenance  | 795.18   |
| KECCA          | Summer Fun, hire of hall                   | 81.00    |
| Barclays Bank  | Debit charges                              | 11.50    |
| B gas          | Elec Bill Church Lane<br>offices           | 67.30    |
| B gas          | Gas Bill Church Lane<br>offices            | 12.43    |
| Zen Internet   | Website Aug-Sep                            | 13.79    |
| Onecom         | Inv. 7858600 17/07/26                      | 153.90   |
| Onecom         | Inv. 7870138 17/08/26                      | 153.90   |

|                    |                                                            |                              |
|--------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------|
|                    |                                                            | <b>2855</b><br><b>4 of 9</b> |
| Shane Butler       | Stripey Wipey Summer Fun Entertainer                       | 255.00                       |
| FDC                | Contribution to LED Screen Summer Fest                     | 750.00                       |
| Mayday GO Cardless | Additional printing and admin support re Photocopier lease | 57.29                        |
| <b>Total</b>       |                                                            | <b>11,561.73</b>             |

### 96) Grants to Voluntary Organisations

[1] 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.

[2] The approved budget for grants in **2026/27** was **£5,000**.

[3] Applications for consideration by Members at the meeting were as follows:

Chatteris Community First Responders - For resources to deliver CPR training and defib awareness to Chatteris Residents - £480 Approved

Chatteris Town Bowls Club - Grant application towards cost of a multi-purpose Allett C20 machine - £500 Approved. (Cllr Hay declared an interest and left the room while the grant was discussed).

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

### 97) External Auditor's Report

Members were advised that the report was still in the hands of the External Auditors having the final checks completed.

### 98) Police Matters 2

Pc Trev Lovitt joined the meeting and apologised for being late. He reminded members that he covered the Chatteris and Manea area for the neighbourhood policing team and proceeded to run through the recent crime figures for the area.

He said there were incidents of violence and also of suspicious circumstances, the latter was down to hare coursing. There had been an incident on Ireton's Way but that was not related to Chatteris.

Unfortunately, there had been problems with fires (due to people being "idiots" in the hot, dry summer) and there had also been rowdy civil disputes and cases of motor vehicle nuisance.

Pc Lovitt assured members that the police tried to target as many problems as possible and to get out in the community when possible but they were often taken away from their usual duties to cover other officers.

There had been isolated incidents involving drugs which were being dealt with and a man had been arrested for arson in Chatteris and had been remanded in custody. Pc Lovitt said he was now working to get a closure order on the house gutted in the arson attack.

The Mayor said she had been approached by the manager of The Willows nursery as a lady who lived in one of the bungalows opposite had upset parents dropping off their children to the nursery. The lady had tackled the motorists as she claimed they parked across her driveway. The Mayor said this was not the case and the lady had cameras in all her windows. She also said she had been told that the lady had verbally and racially abused parents in front of their young children. The language was allegedly disgusting. The Mayor said the property involved belonged to Clarion Housing Association.

The Clerk said the lady had approached her about the parking problems.

The Mayor said she had told the nurse to report the incidents to the police. Pc Lovitt said he would look into the allegations.

Cllr Selman said a recent CCTV report had recorded two incidents when people were seen using nitrous oxide in their cars parked in Furrowfields car park. The report said there were no officers available to attend. Cllr Selman asked why it had not been possible for the police to follow up the incident at a later date as they had registration numbers and addresses. Pc Lovitt said it was possible to deal with nitrous oxide as a drug but it only stayed in a person's system for a short time so it was difficult to prove anything at a later date. He said if a car was pulled over the police could take action on impaired driving due to drugs and he said if the registration number was given intel markers could be put on the vehicle.

The Mayor reported a lot of vehicle activity in St Peter's Drive at nights with vehicles going to a dark spot where she believed drugs could be hidden. Pc Lovitt asked for registration numbers so the matter could be followed up.

Pc Lovitt was thanked for attending and left the meeting.

## 99) Planning

Cllr Joyce (Chairman) presented the minutes of the Planning Working Group meeting held on the 25<sup>th</sup> August 2026 (**copy attached**). Members also had a copy of Mepal Parish Council's very comprehensive submission on a) the proposed anaerobic digester. The Council strongly recommended refusal but outlined a number of measures which should be introduced if the plan was to go ahead. As a result of reading through the document members agreed to expand on the proposed response to a).

Members ratified the working group's decisions on applications a) to f) (**as shown on appended list**) and agreed to make the following submissions to Fenland District Council and Cambridgeshire County Council:

- a) **Strongly recommend refusal.** This is to be built next to a facility which already causes major problems with traffic congestion and filthy roads, which adds to the

dangers of a red route. Councillors believe the roundabout is an accident waiting to happen.

Roads are subsiding under the weight of the large vehicles and this development will lead to a substantial increase in the number of vehicle movements by slow moving, heavy vehicles. The congestion on the roads is also likely to further increase when work begins on the reservoir and the crematorium opens.

There are continuing problems with odours which are very obnoxious at certain times of the year. This extension brings the development even closer to Chatteris so more homes will be affected by the smell. Current measures to reduce the odours (as promised with the last planning application) do not work and this problem will also be exacerbated if this new plant is granted planning permission. There appears to be no monitoring of the odour or traffic problems.

To say there have been no complaints about the existing facility is simply untrue as the Clerk to the Town Council has in the past made complaints, particularly about the state of the A142.

**However**, the Town Council recognises that this application is likely to be approved and sees no reason why the applicant should not make contributions to the communities who will be affected. There should be significant Section 106 contributions for the communities of Chatteris, Mepal and Manea. Chatteris is badly in need of additional sporting facilities such as a padel court, improvements to existing sports grounds run by local clubs and improvements to the sports ground behind the Sportsman pub.

Before permission is granted Chatteris Town Council also believes that a comprehensive and enforceable package of mitigating measures should be put in place including:

The introduction of safety measures on the A142, including more regular cleaning of the road, improvements to the junction, the installation of wheel washing facilities (originally promised and never installed) and a footpath/cycleway.

A comprehensive traffic-management plan.

Enforceable limits on operating hours and vehicle numbers.

Measures to stop tractors and heavy vehicles being routed through Chatteris and Manea and contributions to road safety measures in Chatteris, in particular improvements to the Slade End roundabout, to mitigate the impact of those vehicles which do make their way through the town.

Proper assessment of existing odour, air quality and road conditions before work begins and frequent monitoring of odours, pollution, traffic and highway-safety problems in the future.

There should be frequent liaison with the affected communities of Chatteris, Mepal and Manea and arrangements for formal review and enforcement if monitoring identifies problems.

There should also be a clearly publicised complaints procedure with named responsible contacts and response times.

- b) Recommend Refusal. Overdevelopment and lack of any onsite parking will exacerbate problems in an area where parking is already an issue. The bin stores will be unsightly in a conservation area.
- c) Support
- d) Reluctantly Support. Blackmill Drove must be improved and maintained and must be kept open at all times as it is a public right of way. No building materials should be stored on the drove and the site should be regularly monitored (Cllrs Hay and Joyce declared an interest).
- e) Support
- f) Recommend Refusal to the felling of yet another healthy tree in the area but agree to works to trees. Would like to see tree officer's report.

Cllr Selman said she had been approached by local residents concerned that new housing developments did not appear to have sufficient fire hydrants for the fire brigade. Cllr Murphy assured her that most developments did contain new fire hydrants and the fire service was consulted on planning applications.

#### **99) Summer Fun Verbal Report**

Both the Mayor and the Clerk said the Summer Fun shows for children - organised and funded by the Town Council - had been very popular. There were record numbers of people at each of the four shows and on one occasion there had been over 100 children in attendance with their parents/grandparents/childminders or nursery.

The Mayor said everyone had praised the shows and she had never seen children laugh so much.

#### **100) Allotments Roadway Quotes and Dip Tank Trial**

The Clerk said she had shown another company the work which needed to be carried out on the north side roadway at the allotments and she was waiting for a price from them. She had just had a reply from another company she had contacted and they were also keen to quote for the work. She would bring all three quotes to the October meeting for a decision.

The Clerk also proposed getting a price to put in one dip tank on the north side as a trial to see how popular dip tanks would be. After a summer when hosepipes were largely banned and people had been using watering cans to water their crops it had been suggested this was a good time to put in a dip tank.

#### **101) Sportsman Field Update**

The Clerk said she had spoken to the FDC officer who had taken over the possible transfer of the Sportsman playing field to Chatteris Town Council. The officer had explained that FDC saw the field as an asset and he had been asked to get a valuation of the land. He also said

FDC was duty bound to get the best value for anything it sold. The Clerk pointed out the land had originally been gifted to the town and there was no intention to pay for land which belonged to the town. The Town Council was prepared to take over the maintenance and insurance of the land to save FDC money. The officer said it would be up to FDC members to decide whether the land would be handed over to the Town Council or there would be a charge for it. The Clerk suggested the land had a covenant which meant it could not be developed for housing.

## **102) Traffic Issues**

Railway Lane: The Clerk had received two complaints from residents of Railway Lane about the parking along the road. The residents pointed out that thoughtless drivers were double parking and parking opposite driveways making it difficult for residents to pull out of driveways and creating a chicane which it was difficult for motorists, the fire engine and ambulance to negotiate. Property and vehicles had been damaged and lorries used it as a cut through. Children crossing to the school footpath were in danger. The residents called for double yellow lines or traffic calming measures.

Cllr Murphy confirmed there were now major problems thanks to people parking on the road rather than using Furrowfields car park.

The Clerk suggested the Council could apply for LHI funding for double yellow lines and suggested they should also be considered in Wood Street where motorists also now parked on both sides of the road creating a chicane. She said local residents would need to demonstrate support for such a scheme.

Prospect Way/Dock Road: The officer responsible for drawing up the footpath scheme for Prospect Way and Dock Road had requested a site meeting after the Town Council had stated it was not in favour of the scheme as there was no lighting proposed for Dock Road. The site meeting had been arranged for the 3<sup>rd</sup> September at 9.30am.

East Park Street: The Mayor and the Clerk had been approached by a resident of Allen's Yard complaining about cars parking across the entrance to the yard and parking on double yellow lines in the vicinity of the off licence. The police said they could not take action as the yellow lines were so faded so the Mayor had requested the lines be refreshed and the Clerk had backed up the request pointing out there had been accidents in the area.

Temporary Traffic Orders: The Clerk had been notified of the temporary closure of West Park Street and Park Street on the 28<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> October to facilitate drainage maintenance; the closure of part of Westbourne Road on the 27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> October to facilitate telecommunications works. Late notification was received of a closure along Stocking Drove between the 12<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> August to carry out emergency burst water main repairs.

Disabled Parking Bay: It had been confirmed the requested disabled persons parking bay in York Road would not be installed as there was insufficient carriageway width.

Complaints: The Clerk had been copied in to an email sent to Cllr Divine from a resident complaining about the state of disrepair of many roads. The author appeared to have tried all avenues open to get the roads improved and was making a claim for damaged tyres against the County Council.

Roadworks: The latest lists of planned road works in Fenland had been received, along with the September list of events affecting the Highways in the County.

### **103) Reports**

Both the Mayor and Deputy Mayor reported that they were unhappy that the Council offices were sometimes not open to the public when staff were in the offices and pointed out this should not be the case. The Clerk assured members that she usually had both the outer and inner doors open and frequently dealt with enquiries from the public. Often it was a case of directing the person to another council.

Cllr Selman said in the interests of safety and following the lone workers policy the inner door should be shut and locked if there was only one person in the building but the outer door should always be open. Councillors suggested installing a bell that visitors could ring to get officers' attention and putting up an open/close sign.

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

No items were put forward for the next agenda.