



Chatteris Town Council

Annual Report

Year Ending 30th April 2016

The past year has been a positive one as projects have come to fruition, new schemes have begun and the community has pulled together again.

After the disappointments of 2014/15 it has been good to welcome the opening of a new supermarket, to see how local organisations have benefited from the Tesco community fund and to show other towns how to celebrate with the most colourful and lively Midsummer Festival to date and the usual excellent Christmas Lights and In Bloom displays.

The Town Council had the foresight to agree to pay to keep the street lights on when the County Council announced they would switch them off at midnight and the community took up the challenge and formed a group which is working on a new town plan; an idea promoted by the Council.

During the year the Council:

- a) Has administered the distribution of the Tesco community fund to 22 organisations in the town;
- b) Given out grants totalling £1,800 to voluntary organisations, given additional grants to four sports clubs and as usual financially supported the King Edward Centre, the Museum Trust, the Christmas Lights and In Bloom;
- c) Agreed to fund the youth club at the King Edward Centre;
- d) Fought for improvements to roads in the town;
- e) Made a successful argument for a return to one County Councillor to represent the whole town;
- f) Fought to save trees in the town and for felled trees to be replaced;
- g) Successfully applied for funding for the Gas Lamps project and received welcome contributions from the solar farm development and Court Leet;
- h) Celebrated Her Majesty the Queen's 90th birthday by lighting the beacon;
- i) Agreed to purchase more benches for Wenny Road Recreation Ground;
- j) Kept up pressure for a Local Highways Improvement scheme to be implemented in Wenny Road;
- k) Organised and funded the very popular Summer Fun shows for children;
- l) Supported plans for speed reductions on the A142 and traffic calming in Doddington Road/Curf and Willey Terraces;
- m) Received regular updates from the police and Fenland District Council;
- n) Started to plan a pocket park at Little Acre Fen;
- o) Commented on the strategic masterplan for the development at Wenny Road;
- p) Supported residents of West Street in their bid to get bungalows rather than houses built at the rear of their homes;
- q) Agreed to help fund the restoration and promotion of the Millennium Walk around Chatteris;
- r) Agreed to support the Middle Level Commissioners proposals to amend navigation legislation;
- s) Sought solutions to dog fouling problems in the town;
- t) Opposed the expansion of the motocross operation at Block Fen;
- u) Took part in the Remembrance Day parade;
- v) Supported the fencing off of the churchyard, an idea rejected by the PCC;
- w) Made an unsuccessful bid for funding to improve safety at the East Park Street/Wood Street/Wenny Road junction;
- x) Hosted the Cyril Haigh Trust Draw;
- y) Held an induction session for new councillors;
- z) Adopted a press and social media policy.

Speakers and guests at Town Council meetings included:

Sgt Richard Lugg and Inspector Will Davis on policing in Fenland;
Cllr Mark Buckton on the Fens Tourism Partnership Strategy;
PCSO's Shane Green and Beverley Johnson with a crime update for Chatteris;
Pc Janine Hagger and PCSO Joanne Ford on policing in Chatteris and a crime update;

Ms Emily Gutteridge, the Police and Crime Commissioner's Outreach Worker on the work of the PCC, the 101 system and police contact sessions in Chatteris;
Mr Alan Melton on cycle routes around Chatteris.

The Council

Cllr James Carney was elected Mayor for a second term in May 2015 and represented the council and the town at a wide variety of events over the year. He raised money for local charities by having his legs waxed and holding a very successful charity Indian meal in April. Cllr James Burrow was elected Deputy Mayor, also for a second year.

At the May elections nine councillors were elected unopposed to the council leaving three vacant seats on the Slade Lode ward. Co-options took place at the June meeting and Cllrs K Patterson, L Templeman and N Wright joined the Council. Cllr Wright resigned a few months later and an election was held with Cllr Amy Carney winning the contest.

Shown below is the number of full meetings of the Council members attended during the year (the total number of full meetings they were eligible to attend is shown in brackets). Members also attended monthly meetings of the planning and leisure working groups. Councillors also represented the Council on numerous outside bodies.

L Ashley	14 (14)	J Burrow	6 (14)
A Carney	5 (6)	J Carney	13 (14)
W Haggata	12 (14)	A Hay	12 (14)
P Murphy	11 (14)	F Newell	13 (14)
K Patterson	8 (13)	J Smith	14 (14)
I Taylor	10 (14)	L Templeman	9 (14)
N Wright	3 (5)		

The Town Council continues to meet on the first Tuesday in the month and the first 15 minutes are an open forum for members of the public to raise issues. These sessions have traditionally been well attended and during the year the issues raised included:
Residents of West Street's opposition to plans for a development of 58 homes;
Concerns about the police response to an illegal rave at First Furlong Drive;
Opposition to the planned development of land at Wenny;
Concerns about the lack of plans for extra facilities in the town;
Questions about the Section 106 agreement for the Tithe Road development;
Problems experienced at the adult education taster evenings and concerns about the courses offered;
Concerns about dog mess and litter on the streets;
Concerns about speeding in Wenny Road and the state of roads in Chatteris;
Concerns about the state of the road and footpaths in Wenny Estate;
Opposition to plans to increase motocross activities at Block Fen;
Information about Project Hereward and plans for a Fen Edge walk;
Concerns about the standard of work in Wenny Recreation Ground;

An update on activities at the museum;
Complaints about faded yellow lines;
Cllr Richard Mandley, new County Councillor for Chatteris, and Ms Emily Gutteridge, the PCC's Outreach Worker, also took advantage of the Open Forum to introduce themselves to the Council.

The Council's planning working group made recommendations to Fenland District Council and Cambridgeshire County Council on 110 new and revised planning applications. They also heard from:

Four members of the design team for the solar farm at Honeysome Road;
Mr Andrew Hodgson and Mr Andy Dowling on the strategic masterplan for the Wenny Road development;
Mr Martin Wright and Mr Stuart Nunn on plans for the Motocross circuit at Block Fen.

The leisure working group followed the development of the new skatepark, made applications for funding for the Gas Lamps Project, arranged the annual town meeting, started to plan the development of a pocket park at Little Acre Fen and welcomed speakers:

Mr Chris Dawes, the architect for the Gas Lamps Project;
Mr Tom Caldwell, on the possibility of Chatteris being part of the 2017 Tour of Cambridgeshire Cycle Race route;
Dr Marianne Bryant and Mr Ian Mason on the resurrection of the Millennium Walk;
Mr Chris Howes, on the Fens Waterways Project.

During the year the Council said farewell and thank you to its Financial Officer for the past 16 years Mr Ivan Cooper and welcomed a new Financial Officer Mrs Angela Papworth. Mr Cooper's final annual return was once again passed without issue by the Internal and External auditors. The new Financial Officer has prepared the budget and annual return, advised on the precept, administered the Tesco Community Grant fund, dealt with other grant applications and carried out a financial review.

Mrs Joanna Melton has continued as the Clerk and Mr John Richardson, the Council's gardener, has maintained the allotments and other open spaces owned by the Council and assisted FDC in the maintenance of play areas.

For more information on the Council visit the website www.chatteristowncouncil.info

Joanna Melton
May 2016