

**CHATTERIS TOWN COUNCIL  
LEISURE AND GENERAL PURPOSES WORKING GROUP**

**Minutes of a meeting held on Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> July 2018**

**Present:** Cllrs J Smith (Chairman), L Ashley, I Benney, J Burrow, J Carney, A Hay, W Haggata, P Murphy and F Newell.

**L15 18/19 Apologies for Absence**

The meeting was open to all councillors. There were no apologies for absence.

The first item (L16 AWP) was taken **In Committee** due to the sensitive nature of the business to be transacted and was chaired by the Mayor.

**L17 18/19 Speaker Cllr David Mason, on the Growing Fenland Project**

Cllr Mason, FDC's portfolio holder for Growth, was welcomed to the meeting to speak about the Growing Fenland – Chatteris project (the Market Towns Masterplans for Growth scheme). He explained it was a scheme being supported by the Combined Authority with the aim of unlocking funding from the Government and giving local people a greater say in how money should be spent in their town.

A Masterplan for St Neots launched two years ago with £50,000 had attracted funding of £5.5m. The combined authority then decided to extend the scheme to 9 market towns, including 3 in Fenland – Chatteris, March and Whittlesey.

FDC was administering the £50,000 allotted to each town and was in the process of seeking tenders from consultants to draw up bespoke growth plans for each of the towns. Every town was being asked to set up a stakeholder group comprising town, district and county councillors and representatives from business and the community.

The stakeholder group would need to put together a priority list which they would then put to the appointed consultants who would come up with a business plan, based on those priorities, to unlock resources.

Cllr Mason said Whittlesey got on board quickly and already had their stakeholder group set up, helped by the fact they already had a business forum which had 50 members and supported local businesses by ensuring there was more community awareness of what was on offer in Whittlesey. The stakeholder group also included representatives from the Sir Harry Smith School.

He said the successful consultants would be in place by the end of August and all business plans would have to be drawn up by May 2019. They would be working with Whittlesey first, then Chatteris and finally March. Cllr Mason described it as a “once in a lifetime” opportunity.

Cllr Mason suggested problems for Chatteris included transport and how to get people to spend money in the town. Cllr Newell said business rates were also a problem. Cllr Hay pointed out Chatteris had a town plan to work from.

Cllr Mason pointed out Stainless Metalcraft were keen to see an enterprise zone set up so they could bring their supply chain closer to home and they also ran an apprentice school.

Cllr Mason set the stakeholder group should be considering what could be achieved in 5 years – such as an enterprise park. FDC had appointed an officer to work with each group and the officer for Chatteris was Mr Justin Wingfield. Cllr Mason suggested the stakeholder group should meet at least once before involving FDC.

Members agreed the group should include two representatives from business and Stainless Metalcraft and Bartletts should be approached for those representatives.

Cllr Mason was thanked for attending and left assuring members the door was always open for advice.

Members then discussed the stakeholder group. Cllrs Haggata and Hay had already been agreed as the Town and County Council representatives and Cllr Smith asked the district councillors to choose their representative. Cllr Benney was chosen.

Suggestions were put forward for the community representative and it was agreed to Cllr Benney should approach Mr George Munns. It was agreed it was too late in the term to invite a representative from Cromwell and Cllr Ashley suggested approaching the new assistant principal if a representative was required.

The Clerk agreed to approach everyone suggested and set up a date for the first meeting.

### **L18 18/19 FDC Update**

There was no update from Mr Ollier but Cllr Murphy reported the Council's open spaces contractors were catching up as they were not having to cut the grass due to the hot weather. As a result they had begun work on cutting back hedges and trees; those at the main cemetery were due for a trim and he was anxious to see work begin on the trees in the Old Auction Yard.

### **L19 18/19 Matters Arising from the Last Meeting of the Group**

Gate: The Clerk was still awaiting an update on the gate for Little Acre Fen.

In Bloom: Cllr Smith said the judges' verdict was awaited. The positioning of a butterfly bench at the Church meadow had still to be agreed. Cllr Murphy said there was a problem with rubbish around the picnic bench at the meadow because there was no bin nearby. The Clerk reminded members the Council had a budget for bins and it was **agreed** to purchase a bin for the area. Cllr Murphy confirmed FDC would empty it.

## **L20 18/19 Little Acre Fen Update**

Cllr Smith reported the nettles were beginning to re-emerge at Little Acre Fen. The Clerk confirmed the contract to spray the area up to four times over the summer had been agreed and said she would chase the first spray.

The Clerk had been approached by someone wishing to plant a memorial tree in the Pocket Park and had begun to research the cost of supplying native trees.

It was agreed those wishing to purchase a tree should be given a choice of up to 4 trees and the price for each tree should include the cost of a planting kit and the cost of planting. Cllr Murphy said mature or semi-mature larger trees would be best. The size of plaque would have to be agreed with a maximum number of words.

It was agreed a layout for the trees should be drawn up and a contract which would state that those purchasing trees would be responsible for looking after them and the Council could not be held responsible if the tree died.

## **L21 18/19 Level of LHI Contribution**

The Clerk had received information about the possible costs of installing a zebra crossing in Wenny Road. The costs ranged from £17,500 to £31,000. The LHI fund would only give a maximum contribution of £10,000 and it would, therefore, be up to the Town Council to find the additional money.

She said a joint scheme from the Town Council and Cromwell Community College was likely to be looked on favourably. Members suggested the Clerk should approach the school and ask if they would be prepared to give a financial contribution to the scheme which had been suggested by Cromwell pupils.

The Clerk also reminded members the LHI application had to be in by the end of July and it would not be possible to come back to members about the Council's level of funding. The Financial Officer had pointed out there was money set aside for LHI schemes and there was also over £20,000 in General Reserves which could be used as it was not earmarked for other projects.

It was **proposed** that the school should be approached for a contribution and, regardless of their decision, the Town Council should commit up to £10,000 towards the zebra crossing scheme. Seven members voted in favour of the proposal (which was **carried**) and two against.

## **L22 18/19 Planning Application**

Following the Council's decision to support in principle planning application F/YR18/0577/F - Erection of 20 dwellings comprising: 2 x 2-storey 3-bed, 6 x 3-storey 3 bed, 7 x 2-storey 4-bed, 2 x single-storey 4-bed, 3 x 2-storey 5-bed with associated garages, parking and Landscaping on land south of 122 New Road – further information had come to light including widespread opposition from local residents on the grounds of access, overlooking,

flooding and the presence of great crested newts. Allegations had been made that an original plan for homes on the site had been rejected by the Secretary of State in 2004 as the land was unfit to build on. The Clerk said this was not true, an original application had been turned down because the proposals would harm the character of the area and the amenity of adjoining properties, but a subsequent application with amended house designs had been granted planning permission (which had now lapsed).

After discussion it was agreed to amend the Town Council's original comments and submit the following comment:

Support in Principle on the understanding that there are sufficient measures in place to cope with the surface water drainage, bearing in mind that there are already flooding issues in the area, and to ensure the sewerage system, which is already working at capacity, is able to take the additional demand. Planning conditions must be in place and stringently enforced. Members are also concerned about the impact on the junction of New Road and the A142 from vehicles leaving the development and believe the dangers, which already exist and are likely to be exacerbated, should be addressed by Highways. Members suggest Section 106 contributions should be used to improve the junction by the installation of re-active traffic lights.

### **L23 18/19 Any Other Business**

Parking Bay: An application had been received for the installation of a disabled persons parking bay for a resident of Horsegate Gardens. Members were not in agreement with the suggested positioning of the parking bay which was on a bend in the road.

Planning Review: The Mayor had been invited to attend a meeting with officials from an LGA Planning Peer Review to discuss if the changes to FDC's planning service had been positive. The drop in breakfast meeting on the 1<sup>st</sup> August was open all town and parish councils and was the opportunity to discuss honestly the Town Council's experience of the planning service. Cllrs Haggata and Smith agreed to attend the meeting to put forward the Town Council's concerns and asked members to email them with any points these wished to be raised.

### **L24 18/10 Date of Next Meeting**

It was agreed the next Leisure Working Group meeting should be held on Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> August at Little Acre Fen.