

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

Minutes of a meeting held on Tuesday 18th June 2019

Present: Cllrs L Ashley, J Carney, A Charrier, W Haggata, A Hay, F Newell and J Smith.

L1 19/20 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence had been received from Cllr I Benney. Cllrs Carney and Hay had both sent apologies they might be a little late and arrived during agenda item 3 (L3).

L2 19/20 Election of Chairman & Vice Chairman

Cllr Ashley proposed Cllr Smith be re-elected Chairman of the group, seconded by Cllr Newell and agreed by all.

Cllr Ashley proposed Cllr Newell be re-elected Vice Chairman of the group, seconded by Cllr Haggata and agreed by all.

L3 19/20 FDC Update from Mr Phil Hughes

Mr Phil Hughes, FDC Head of Leisure and Open Spaces, was welcomed to the meeting and gave updates on the following:

Leisure Centre

Mr Hughes reported FDC was very happy with the performance of Freedom Leisure who had taken over the running of the leisure centres. Complaints were anticipated, especially as 181 members of staff transferred over, but no complaints were forthcoming. Membership levels were gradually rising as were the number of those taking swimming lessons. New equipment would be introduced in the gyms during the current financial year. Members welcomed the good news and confirmed they had received no complaints about the leisure centre.

Open Spaces

Mr Hughes said FDC had changed its approach to the flower beds it tended. They no longer put in winter bedding plants which cut down on waste. Instead the council was planting sustainable bedding which should last for six or seven years and required less watering. The new shrubs also attracted pollinators. Cllr Smith said sustainable planting gained In Bloom points. FDC was congratulated on keeping the beds tidy over the winter period. Mr Hughes admitted there had been a mix up over the Station Street bed when new plants were ripped out but this was due to a lack of communication and he assured members Mr Kevin Wilkins, FDC officer, was now talking to the In Bloom group.

Tivoli were still the contractors, Mr Hughes told members, and they were on track after problems in 2018, which included seven break-ins and thefts.

The Clerk had contacted Mr Hughes about the church meadow area which was not being cut back properly after its' re-seeding in 2018, In Bloom had also complained about the area. Mr Hughes assured members the area would be cut back.

Cemeteries

Mr Hughes told members he had inspected the cemeteries and bramble and tree work, costing about £13,500, would be carried out in Meeks cemetery when the nesting season was over. FDC would be talking to the Wildlife Trust about a management programme for the area which would see the cemetery returning to more of a nature park.

FDC would also be drawing up a management plan for all its trees and had a report which highlighted all the tree work which was required.

Mr Hughes admitted he had received complaints about the state of the main cemetery and bramble work would be carried out on the right hand side of the cemetery (site of the older graves) but it would not be cut to the same standard as the left hand side. He admitted bramble and tree work was required along the fence line and said it was hoped probation would help Tivoli with the work.

Mr Hughes said Rebecca Robinett was looking into the idea of setting up a Friends of group for Meeks Cemetery

Recreation Grounds

Cllr Haggata reminded Mr Hughes that Mr Ollier had promised that trees would be cut back between Wenny Road Recreation Ground and the Juniper Drive estate. Mr Hughes said there would need to be further consultation on the idea with neighbours. Cllr Haggata said all had agreed the trees should be cut back so they were just a metre above the fences.

Cllr Smith asked about the replacement of a new tree which had died at Wenny Recreation Ground. Mr Hughes said there was a lot of work to do on existing trees to keep them in a good state without replacing or planting new trees. Cllr Smith queried if FDC's TPO map was up to date.

Mr Hughes said about £45,000 from Section 106 funds would be spent on replacing old, rotten play equipment at Wenny Recreation Ground some of which had already been removed. He said the see-saw was due to come out but a replacement see-saw was not planned. Members asked if the existing see-saw could be saved and painted/cleaned up. He said the new play equipment would go in before the clawback date for the Section 106 funds in September.

Mr Hughes also admitted the plan was to take the money for the tree works in the cemeteries from Section 106 funds. He said this was a correct use of the money with members insisting Section 106 funds should not be raided to carry out general maintenance work which was the responsibility of FDC.

They argued they should have the say on how their section 106 money was spent and pointed out the money was allocated for recreation areas and open spaces and cemeteries were neither. They also pointed out Section 106 funds were dwindling and until developments

were given the go ahead they would not be replaced. Cllr Hay said she would rather spend the money on a street light for Dock Road and said money to carry out maintenance work in the cemeteries should come from FDC reserves.

Cllr Smith reminded Mr Hughes that the money had originally been allocated for the Larham Way Play area and she pointed out that safety surfaces in the play area were in need of attention.

Last Minutes

On matters arising from the last minutes, Mr Hughes assured members he would look into the re-installation of the bench at Wenny Recreation Ground, the zip wire ramp had been repaired and he agreed to chase up the removal of the metal from the Huntingdon Road recreation ground. He was thanked for attending the meeting.

After Mr Hughes had left it was agreed to **recommend** that the Council write to the Chief Executive stating that the Town Council did not agree to the use of Section 106 funds to carry out routine maintenance work in the cemeteries as these were not recreation areas. It was FDC's responsibility to maintain trees and remedy past neglect of trees from its own resources.

L4 19/20 Any Matters Arising from the Last Meeting of the Group

L79) Street Maps: The Clerk apologised that she had not had time to order the street maps despite having the measurements from Cllrs Haggata and Smith. She pointed out the printers had been busy producing the Festival programme.

L5 19/20 Little Acre Fen Pocket Park Update

The Clerk was able to report on significant progress on the pocket park. The pond and dipping platform were now complete and the pond was starting to fill up but if needed the Clerk had asked if the fire brigade would complete the job.

Work had begun on the dry stone pond and that day the Financial Officer had requested R J Warren's put in the final footpaths to the dipping platform and around the gate. She had also asked for a quote for two litter bins for the area. The park was being regularly maintained by Warrens.

Following the request from Cllr Carney, Anglian Water had installed a water tank to collect water from the roof of the pumping station so it could be used to water plants. Unfortunately there had already been some damage but this had been repaired by Anglian Water.

Orchards East had offered to supply and install an interpretation board for the community orchard free of charge. They had examples of boards installed in other communities and it

was agreed that it would be best to let the Friends of Little Acre Pocket Park (FLAPP) decide how the board should look.

Cllr Carney said FLAPP was now an independent group with its own bank account and was, therefore, able to access grants. Cllr Smith said it was already looking for a £500 grant from Healthy Fenland.

The Clerk asked for permission to approach the company who had produced banners for the Festival about a quote for information boards at the Park.

She suggested the following wording for the board:

“Welcome to Little Acre Fen Pocket Park

This park has been created by Chatteris Town Council for the enjoyment of all.

It is maintained by the Council and the Friends of Little Acre Pocket Park.

Please treat the park with respect and help to keep the area tidy by cleaning up after yourself and your dog using the bins provided.

Please supervise young children at all times.

No Motorbikes or Quad Bikes (*motorbike sign with cross through it*)

Report problems to the Town Clerk on 01354 695166”

It was agreed the sign should also say: ‘The Council will not be responsible for injury caused by misuse of the park.’

It was also agreed there should be a sign, in red, on the dipping platform to read: “Beware Deep Water. Children should be supervised at all times.”

Members were also keen for a map of the area to go up. County Highways had said it would not be appropriate to install brown signs to direct people to the park but they could put in blue pedestrian signs or black and white directional ones. Members agreed to request three blue signs, one for West Street, one for Blackmill Drove and the other for the Old Railway Line footpath.

The Clerk suggested once the major work was complete and the signs were in **the Council should organise an official opening of the park. This was recommended.**

L6 19/20 Church Meadow Bench

The Council had been asked to move the Church meadow picnic bench because of the anti-social behaviour it was attracting. Rubbish had constantly to be cleared from around it and repairs had been necessary twice due to vandalism. Cllr Smith said it should be moved as it had not been the asset anticipated and members agreed.

The Clerk asked for ideas where it could be located and the favoured position for the majority was the grassed area at the front of the church next to the two existing benches. Furrowfields

Recreation Ground was another suggested position, if the Church grounds was not possible, and Cllr Carney said it could be located out the front of the King Edward Centre.

L7 19/20 End of World War II Commemorations

The Council had been asked if it wished to take part in a 2Cry for Peace Around the World2 which would be held on the 8th May 2020 in commemoration/celebration of the 75th Anniversary of VE Day (the end of war in Europe). The Town Crier would make the cry. Members agreed to take part and asked if the beacon could also be lit.

L8 19/20 Town Guide

The Clerk had written to former councillor Kirsty Patterson asking if there were any reasons why the town guide layout could not be completed by the 31st May 2019 but had heard nothing.

Cllr Smith suggested reverting to plan A which was to update and then reproduce the original 2014 town guide. She was happy to check again all the information was up to date and was busy taking new photographs for the guide.

The Clerk said DJ Richards had made an excellent job of the Midsummer Festival programme which was bright and modern and suggested asking them for a price to redesign the look of the town guide ahead of printing it. This was agreed.

L9 19/20 Any Other Business

Charging Points: The Clerk had received some publicity about electrical vehicle charging points. Members were keen on the idea but agreed to wait as they were mentioned in the Growing Fenland report. Cllr Haggata said he believed such points would be a great asset.

Roundabout near Jacks: Cllr Smith said she had spoken to Marketforce who organised the sponsorship of roundabouts and had been informed that anyone agreeing to sponsor the roundabout would be expected to commit to a two year contract and the cost was likely to be £250 to £300 a month, Cllr Smith said she would approach Jacks and the Clerk offered to pass on a contact email address.

There was a report that children had been throwing loose bricks from the roundabout into the road and Cllr Hay said she would chase up the repairs with the County Council. The Clerk said at least the weeds on the roundabout had been cut back.

L10 19/20 Date of Next Meeting: Tuesday 16th July 2019.

