

CHATTERIS TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes Dated 5th November 2019

1982

1 of 13

Minutes of a meeting of Chatteris Town Council held on Tuesday 5th November 2019 at the Council Chambers, 14 Church Lane, Chatteris.

Present: Councillors L Ashley (Mayor), I Benney (Deputy Mayor), W Haggata, A Hay, P Murphy, F Newell, M Petrou and J Smith.

132) Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence had been received from Cllrs J Carney, A Charrier, A Gowler and I Taylor.

133) Declarations of Interest and Dispensations to Speak and Vote on Declarable Pecuniary Interest Items

Cllrs Hay and Murphy declared an interest in all planning matters as members of Fenland District Council's planning committee and Cllr Benney declared an interest in all Fenland District Council items.

134) Open Forum

There was just one member of the public present who was invited by the Mayor to speak but did not wish to do so.

135) Speaker: Mrs Tanya Meadows, Head of Adult Learning & Skills at Cambridgeshire County Council

Mrs Meadows was welcomed to the meeting and explained she was head of Cambridgeshire Skills, the County Council's adult learning service. She said the Combined Authority were the new funders of adult learning (replacing Whitehall) and funding would be based on their Skills Strategy which was influenced by national policies. The focus of funding would be on areas of greatest need – Fenland and East Cambs - and would be split into three sub-economies – residents, communities and employers. Cambridgeshire Skills would also work to District and County Council objectives.

Mrs Meadows explained the new service had to provide benefit for those progressing into jobs and education and offer opportunities to gain new skills for those in employment so they could upskill and progress.

In total £12million would come from the Combined Authority and this would fund 12 providers in the County (originally there were 172 providers). The maximum level of sub-contracting would be set at 20% of the funding allocation.

1983

2 of 13

There would be two main training hubs – March Community Centre and Ely Library – but there would also be training opportunities at different venues in libraries, schools, children’s centres and community centres. The aim was to provide a quality learning experience.

Mrs Meadows admitted Chatteris had not had the best experiences of adult education in the past so she was anxious to know what was needed. Two courses were already planned in the library but she also hoped to make links with the King Edward Centre, Cromwell Community College and the Children’s Centre with the aim of taking learning out into the communities and removing barriers to learning.

Cllr Benney pointed out the two courses planned – Keeping Up with the Children and Christmas Upcycling – were entry level and he asked if skills offered in future would take people to GCSE standard. He also asked what sort of apprenticeships and technical training would be offered. Mrs Meadows confirmed more advanced skills would be offered and while the service did not currently engage with apprenticeships the aim was to do so in future. There was a pot of money which larger employers had to contribute to through a levy and this was not being spent so the aim was to access this pool.

Cllr Haggata pointed out transport was often a barrier to residents being able to access training and Mrs Meadows said higher level training could be offered in Chatteris, using community venues, if there was a demand.

Cllr Petrou asked how Cambridgeshire Skills would identify skills gaps and Mrs Meadows said they would use data available, including the Sphere Report which showed that 20% of Chatteris residents were not at Level 2 skills. However, Cllr Smith pointed out this could include a large number of elderly people and the group would need to target people who could benefit from improvements to their skills. Mrs Meadows pointed out the elderly could not be excluded in terms of social isolation. Cllr Hay said many older people could not get to grips with IT and this led to isolation. Mrs Meadows explained the government was launching a new digital skills agenda and this would be embedded in Cambridgeshire Skills curriculum.

Cllr Petrou offered to help Mrs Meadows find ways of approaching local people to discuss their learning needs and said this could be through powerful social media channels, open days, etc. It was also suggested Mrs Meadows could attend the Midsummer Festival to gain feedback.

Mrs Meadows and Cllr Petrou exchanged contact details and she was thanked for attending the meeting.

136) Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 1st October 2019 were agreed and signed as a correct record by the Mayor after members had agreed to Cllr Smith's suggestion that the word 'misled' should replace the word 'duped' in Min 130).

137) Matters Arising from the Minutes

Min 116) Waste e-permit scheme: The Council had received a lengthy reply from the County Council on the reasons why an e-permit scheme had been introduced at Household Recycling Centres. The reply stated there was no evidence changes to council waste policies led to an increase in fly-tipping but the Council would be monitoring fly-tipping levels. Cllr Hay pointed out neighbouring counties had similar schemes and Cambridgeshire was concerned that, before the introduction of the scheme, it was taking waste from neighbouring counties.

Min 123) Growing Fenland – Chatteris Report: Following approval of the report by the Town Council it had been due to go before both Fenland District Council and the County Council during November before submission to the Combined Authority; however with a General Election called on December 12th purdah meant the report would not go to the Councils until January.

Min 114) Drains: The Clerk reported that Anglian Water had been in touch on a number of occasions to confirm that the drains network in the High Street had been cleaned after the lifting of manhole covers and the gullies in Church Lane were cleaned in August.

Road markings in the High Street: The County Council had finally responded to calls for the disabled parking bays in the centre of the town to be re-painted by stating the problem did not require immediate treatment and would, therefore, be added to a three year rolling programme of work. However Cllr Hay said she had been informed that re-painting the bays in the High Street and West Street would be a priority in the new financial year and markings were being re-painted at Burnsfield Estate.

Min 116) Dog Fouling: The Street Scene officer had been to inspect Fairway and Blackmill Road following complaints about dog fouling. Although she did not find excessive amounts she had replaced dog signs and would be carrying out patrols. She had also requested cleaning of the cobbled area outside The Ship.

Min 129) Operation London Bridge: A meeting had taken place to discuss Operation London Bridge and a protocol for the Council would now be drawn up based on decisions taken at the meeting.

138) Police Matters

Members had received the following report on information received from the police in the past month:

Local Police

Please see attached the confidential report from Sgt Richard Lugg on the Fenland Neighbourhood Policing team's work over the past month.

Neighbourhood Alerts

1/10/19: Advice to secure online accounts with a strong, unique password and to enable two-factor authentication process.

9 & 16/10/19: Request to complete survey on delivery of Neighbourhood Watch strategy.

14/10/19: Information about members discount for Neighbourhood Watch members on Era Products.

22/10/19: Round-up of the latest convictions and news.

28/10/19: Request for information on where speeding is an issue in Cambridgeshire as a lead up to Road Safety Week (18th to 24th November).

29/10/19: Tips for a safe and happy Halloween including a downloadable poster.

29/10/19: Warning about a new scam that charges individuals for an Amazon Prime subscription.

1/11/19: Advice on how to safely enjoy Bonfire Night celebrations.

4/11/19: Information about a top secret Cyberhood Watch Campaign launched on the 5th November.

139) FDC, Street Scene, Sec 106 and CCTV Updates

Members had a copy of the latest updates (**copy attached**).

Furrowfields: The Clerk had received two complaints about the way the hedge around Furrowfields Recreation Ground had been cut, the loss of nesting and roosting sites, the way the contractors had left branches hanging and had not cleared up after the work. The complaints had been passed to Fenland District Council for comment.

140) Financial Officer's Report

(1) Financial Statement

Members had before them a budgetary control statement for the Revenue (Precept) Account as at 22nd October 2019 showing expenditure of £197,292.83 and income of £251,772.68 (including a full year's precept income) compared with budgets, along with a bank reconciliation statement and a summary statement of reserves and funds balances.

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

(2) New Photocopier Contract

Members were advised that the current lease on the office photocopier was due for renewal in December 2020. The cost of the current lease was £747.88 + vat per annum plus £136.00 costs in 2019 to date for additional prints surplus to the agreement inclusive prints. Total cost £883.91.

The supplier offered an early termination proposal which provided an upgrade to the current machine under a new 5-year lease which included additional mono and colour copies based on the Council's current usage.

The new lease was £799.84 + vat per annum but there shouldn't be any additional print costs. However, if additional printing was required this would be charged at a rate of 4p for colour and .4p for mono prints compared to the current rate of 7p for colour and .7p for mono prints. The new lease contract would make savings of approx. £80 per annum based on the figures & usage for 2019 and with the additional prints included in the lease it should avoid any excess charges.

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

(3) Youth Club Pool Table

Members were reminded that a CAFY Grant was given to purchase equipment for the Youth Club. One of the items purchased from the grant was a pool table that cost £100.00.

Unfortunately, the Youth Club had been advised by the Caretaker & the Manager of the King Edward Centre that they could not accommodate the pool table due to a lack of storage space and it being too big and heavy to be manoeuvred about. The pool table had been purchased in 2018/19 and was being stored until a solution was found.

The Youth Club Leader decided to replace the pool table with some new equipment that the youth club participants had suggested they would like at the youth club. The cost of the new equipment he purchased was £100 and consisted of a kwick cricket set £52.00; indoor football goal £38.00 and a set of bibs £10.00. He also bought new dodge balls as his original ones had been lost at the KEC and new arts and crafts equipment.

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

(4) Museum CIO (Charitable Incorporated Organisation) Status Application

Members were advised that a meeting was held between the Museum Trustees and the Museum Society to discuss the way forward with regards to the Society obtaining a CIO status.

Members received a report outlining what was agreed between the Museum Trustees and the Museum Society.

It was **RESOLVED** that the report be noted

141) Defibrillator Grant

Members were reminded that at the previous full Council meeting held on the 1st October 2019 a grant application was received from Community Defibrillators for Chatteris requesting a grant towards a new defibrillator and cabinet to be installed in Chatteris.

The Clerk had previously received an email request from the Charity for £145 to go towards a training device costing £395.00. Jacks had paid a grant to another company who had agreed to donate £250 but would only release the funds once the equipment was paid for and a proof of delivery was received. The Clerk advised Community Defibrillators to send a completed grant application in for consideration of the £145 so the funds from the Jacks' grant would be released. However, the £145 shortfall for the training equipment was sourced from fund

raising, the equipment was bought and the Jacks grant money was released.

The Charity's next fund-raising project was to raise funds to purchase and install a 4th Defibrillator & Cabinet in Chatteris Town, so they completed a grant application requesting a grant towards this project.

Members asked the Financial Officer to enquire how much it would cost to purchase a new defibrillator and cabinet and advise at the November Council meeting.

The Financial Officer advised Members that the cost for a defibrillator was £949.99 + vat and £480 for the cabinet + vat. If the Council purchased any of the equipment it could claim the vat back, unlike the Charity who would be unable to do so and this would add to the cost.

Members were advised that the Town Council had the spending power to purchase the equipment under the Public Health Act 1936 Spending power S234.

Members agreed it would benefit the Town to have a 4th defibrillator and discussed where other defibrillators were situated in the Town and where the best place to install the new one would be. It was proposed it should go at the Bridge Street/Aldi end of the town either at the Applegreen Petrol Station, The Ship pub or the Bridge House takeaway. Members agreed to approve the purchase of a new defibrillator and cabinet on the condition that the Town Council would decide where it would be situated and the Defibrillator Charity would be responsible for its maintenance and upkeep once it was in situ.

It was **RESOLVED** to purchase a defibrillator & cabinet and approve the report.

142) Repairs to Access Road to Little Acre Pocket Park

Members were advised that the Rights of Way Officer had offered some free road planings for the access road to the Little Acre Pocket Park as it was in a poor state of repair. The Financial Officer obtained a quotation of £649 + vat from a contractor to supply labour and machinery to collect the planings from March Highways Depot and repair the road accordingly. The Financial Officer advised Members that there were funds in the LHI & Highways holding account to pay for the work.

Members agreed to approve the works at a cost of £649 + vat and it was **RESOLVED** the report be noted and approved.

143) Christmas Lights Testing Fee

Members were advised that due to the new County Council attachment policy the Christmas Lights and their sockets now had to be electrically tested before they could be attached to the lampposts. This was an additional cost that the Christmas Lights Committee did not budget for. The quotation they received to test the electrical supply points was £595 + vat. They approached the Clerk to ask if the Town Council would match their proposed offer of £250. The Clerk & the Financial Officer agreed to match the cost and the County Council agreed to pay the difference for one year only as a gesture of goodwill. The Financial Officer advised

the Christmas Lights Committee Member to arrange for the invoice to be sent directly to the Town Council for payment as she would be able to claim the vat element of the invoice back making a further savings for the Christmas Lights Fund.

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

144) Draft Precept Budget 2019/20

Members had before them a proposed draft precept budgetary control sheet (**attached**) that the Financial Officer had produced for Members consideration.

As per SLCC advice, she informed Members they needed to consider projects which might require funding in the next financial year to ensure sufficient provision was included in the Precept budget.

Under the Local Government Financial Regulations any new project to be included in the Precept budget normally required a written report.

The Financial Officer advised Members to note that two new budgets had been included in the 20/21 draft Precept: The first was for road closures for the Remembrance Parade as the Police had advised they could no longer guarantee their services in helping with road closures. The Clerk had been advised it was a civic duty to arrange the road closures so the Town Council needed to take on the responsibility. The second new budget was for Operation London Bridge.

The Financial Officer advised Members that the Precept would remain the same as the 2019/20 Precept budget of £151,000. The additional spend would be funded from the General Fund account. Members were also reminded that the Internal Auditor had previously advised the Financial Officer that the general fund needed to be reduced as the External Auditors would carry out an advisory on the accounts if the general fund was too high.

The Financial Officer proposed that specific underspent budgets could be transferred into the respective holding accounts.

Members **approved** the first draft budget and also **agreed** that underspent funds should be transferred into the respective holding accounts at the end of the financial year as proposed by the Financial Officer.

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

145) Replacement of Pipework at 14 Church Lane

The Clerk had received an email from the Museum Curator outlining his concerns regarding leaks from the old pipework in the building. The Clerk advised the Curator that as there had only been two small leaks in the space of over ten years, which had been swiftly repaired, plus a small leak in the newer pipework in the toilet, the Council could not justify replacing all the pipework on a “just in case basis”. She also advised the Curator that the Council had no budget for such works.

The Curator told the Clerk he would apply to get a grant for the works as he was worried that the Museum artefacts could be ruined if there was another leak.

The Financial Officer requested a quotation from the plumber who carried out the servicing of the boiler and central heating in the building. The quotation was for £5,280.00. The Plumber advised the Financial Officer and the Clerk that it would be a very large job causing much upheaval and disruption in the building as floor boards and ceilings would need to be removed to get to the said pipework and therefore all the museum artefacts would need to be boxed up out of the way whilst the work was being carried out.

He advised that in his opinion the works would be unnecessary as the copper pipework could last for many more years.

On this basis and the fact there had only been two leaks in the last 10 years the Financial Officer could not justify spending the money to carry out the work. The Mayor suggested it would be difficult for the Museum to get grants for the work as the building belonged to and was insured by the Town Council.

Members **RESOLVED** to follow the advice of the expert and agreed not to carry out the works at this stage.

146) Payment of Accounts

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

Payee	Description	Amount £
Financial Officer	Payroll November	1,058.92
Clerk	Payroll November	1,537.81
Pension Fund	Payroll November	1,365.37
HMRC	Payroll November	630.10
Zen Internet	Website Oct-Nov	10.79
Onecom	Phone Bill October	77.46
Barclays Bank	Charges	14.96

		1990
S Payne	Grass cutting & Gardening Services	9 of 13 1,060.00
Clerk	Reim: Wasp Spray Allotments & TEN (mulled wine stall in aid of Festival)	28.99
Rose Fire & Security	Bi Annual Service Fire Alarm system + Emergency Lighting + replacement parts & labour	254.04
Rose Fire & Security	Dual Com Monitoring Charges for 2019/2020	489.60
G M James Electrical	Gas Lamp works & replacement of faulty parts	197.30
M Edgley Plumbing & Heating	Works carried out re AWA specification & repairs to leaking pipe	1,110.00
Chatteris Good Companions	Voluntary organisations grant	250.00
Chatteris Community Car Scheme	Voluntary organisations grant	250.00
Magpas	Grant towards medication & lifesaving equipment	250.00
RBL Chatteris Division	Grant towards Remembrance parade refreshments	200.00
Chatteris Town Football Club	Grant towards grass cutting equipment	300.00
Ethos Walters	Additional Printing	38.78
Wave	Council Offices Q Water Rates	229.45
Wave	LHS Allotments Q Water Rates	149.41
Wave	RHS Allotments Q Water Rates	201.80
R J Warren	Little Acre spraying & additional cut	165.60
Cromwell Fire Ltd	Fire Extinguisher Service	135.26
Chatteris In Bloom	Watering Service grant	1,015.00

Total		1991 10 of 13 £11,020.64
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147) Remembrance Parade Arrangements & Future Financial Implications

Members had received details of the Chatteris Remembrance Parade, the wreath laying ceremony and the service on Sunday 10th November.

The Clerk had already outlined the financial implications for future years when the Council was likely to be responsible for arranging the road closures.

Cllr Carney said he would be handing over a cheque for monies raised by the Poppies on a Lamppost scheme he had organised.

148) Planning

Cllr Haggata presented the minutes of the planning working group meeting held on Tuesday 29th October 2019 (**copy attached**).

The group had made recommendations on planning applications a) to o)) (as shown on the **appended list**). These were ratified by the full council who also considered a revised application and one further application.

It was agreed to return the applications to Fenland District Council marked as follows:

- a) The issue of free flowing traffic and access on to the A141 needs to be resolved before the Town Council will support the application. Traffic lights at Slade End roundabout are a necessity and the proposed footway from Doddington Road to the Jack's site along Fenland Way should also be a cycleway.
- b) Council has already confirmed that building has been used as an estate agents/letting agency for over 10 years.
- c) Support
- d) Support
- e) Support
- f) Recommend Refusal due to the height of the wall and concerns this will set a precedent.
- g) Recommend Refusal, will result in the loss of a long established car parking area.
- h) Support
- i) Support
- j) Support
- k) Support
- l) Support
- m) Support
- n) Support
- o) Support

- p) Support
- q) Support

P31) Plans to Remove Public Payphones: Members agreed not to object to the planned removal of the public payphones in Ash Grove and Park Street. They also agreed not to adopt the phone boxes for use as housing for defibrillators as both were near existing defibrillators. Micropub: The Clerk had queried why the plans for a micropub in Chatteris had been held up by building control resulting in the applicant abandoning the idea. Head of planning Mr Nick Harding said the issue was related to an inadequate means of escape in the event of a fire. Through liaison with the fire service it was agreed the provision of an enhanced smoke detection arrangement would mitigate the problem and building regulations approval was then issued.

149) Fenland Local Plan Consultation

The Fenland Local Plan Consultation had been launched on October 11th and everyone had until the 21st November to submit comments. A drop in session for the public had been held at Chatteris library on the 4th November.

There had been insufficient time to discuss the Local Plan and consultation at the Planning Working Group meeting on the 29th October it had, therefore, been agreed that the Mayor should call an extraordinary meeting of the Council just to discuss the Local Plan and this would be held on Monday 11th November. The Mayor encouraged as many members as possible to make the meeting.

150) Leisure & General Purposes Working Group Report & Recommendations

Cllr Smith (Chairman) presented the minutes of the leisure meeting held on 15th October 2019 (**copy attached**).

L30) Update: The Clerk had now received an FDC Update for the next leisure meeting.

L32) Pocket Park: Cllr Smith said she had tried to reason with quad bikes who were using the Pocket Park. It had been suggested to prevent them accessing the park from the Old Railway Line an additional bollard was required. Unfortunately a couple of trees had been damaged either by quad bikes or a strimmer. Cllr Smith also reported FLAPP members had cleared some of the undergrowth swamping the hedge plants.

Mr Lawrence at Stainless Metalcraft had been interested in the idea of siting the Fen Tiger at the Pocket Park.

L34) Signs: It was agreed the Clerk should look into the idea of a larger sign pointing pedestrians to the Museum and Council Chambers.

L36) Sponsorship: The Company interested in sponsoring Jack's roundabout had received a price which they felt was too high but they were negotiating. In the meantime Cllr Hay had

received notification that County Highways had begun to look into ways to repair the roundabout.

L36) Cobbled Areas: Cllr Murphy said he was negotiating for FDC to purchase a smaller street cleaner which could be used in Chatteris.

151) Future of Connections Bus

The Project Manager of the Connections Bus, Mr Alan Webb, had been in contact to say they would be continuing to visit Chatteris up until Christmas with a slight change from Tuesday to Wednesday nights. Attendance averaged 22 young people each week and the youth workers were building positive relationships with the children.

Mr Webb had asked if the Town Council might be interested in funding future youth work. The Clerk had asked for costs but had explained that the Council was already financially supporting one youth club it had taken over from the County Council.

Mr Webb said the cost of a weekly session (1.5 hours with three youth workers) would be £200.

Members agreed this was too costly and resolved not to financially support the Connections Bus, especially as there was no allowance in the budget for the spring term. Cllr Smith said had there been a decrease in the number of young people making a nuisance of themselves on the streets she might have suggested it was worth investing in but the bus did not appear to target those who required intervention.

152) James Henry Blake's Charity

The Council had been approached by the James Henry Blake Charity asking if there were any groups or schools in the town who would benefit from receiving extra funding so youngsters could take part in organised activities. The 2nd Chatteris Scout Group and the Chatteris Guide Group had both benefitted from grants from the Charity in the past.

The Charity had been set up to help poor children in Mansfield and Chatteris go on holiday. In 2009 its aims had changed to: "assisting a child in need of support in any activity of leisure or personal development deemed appropriate by the Trustees".

The Mayor suggested the Army Cadets would be worthy recipients. She pointed out the large group struggled for funding but was always on hand for RBL organised activities such as Remembrance Day commemorations and always helped at the Festival. Sometimes children who struggled at school joined the cadets and once they put on the uniform they were proud participants.

Members **agreed** to recommend that the Army Cadets should receive the funding.

153) Traffic Issues

LHI: The Clerk confirmed that following an email consultation with members she had submitted a new LHI application for a school drop off and pick up times 20mph speed limit and speed reducing measures on approaches to the school.

Rosemary Lane: The Clerk had received an email from a resident of Rosemary Lane complaining about the surface of the footpath and pointing out someone was likely to have an accident. Councillors Smith and Hay had tried to arrange works to the pavement in the past to no avail but Cllr Hay asked for the email to be forwarded so she could try again.

AD: Cllr Carney had complained about the mud and mess on the A142 road from un-netted trailers taking maize to the Anaerobic Digester and about the long queues they created when they refused to pull over. The Clerk had also received a complaint about the AD tractors and trailers from a resident of Huntingdon Road who was also annoyed by the working hours (late into the evening and all day on a Sunday) as the tractor and trailers were shaking his house.

Complaints: Cllr Haggata complained about potholes in The Shrubbery and was advised to report them on-line. Cllr Smith said the footpath along London Road was in a terrible state.

Roundabout: Councillors agreed major investment was needed at the Slade End roundabout where there was almost constant congestion with the problems becoming worse during rush hours. It was agreed to write to Highways and ask them to monitor the roundabout with a view to installing traffic lights.

Road works: The latest bulletins listing road works & events affecting the highway had been received.

154) Correspondence

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

Circus: Members agreed they would like to see a circus in Chatteris and agreed to ask FDC if there was a suitable venue in Chatteris.

155) Reports

Cllr Smith had submitted a written report of the CCTV partner liaison meeting she had attended on the 16th October 2019 along with a copy of the Powerpoint presentation made at the event.

156) Items for the Next Agenda

No items were put forward for the next agenda.

