

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

**Minutes of a meeting held via Zoom on Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> July 2021**

**Present:** Cllrs J Smith (Chairman), L Ashley, I Benney, J Carney, A Charrier, A Gowler, A Hay and F Newell.

**L20 21/22 Apologies for Absence**

An apology for absence had been received from Cllr Haggata.

**L21 21/22 FDC Update**

FDC Head of Leisure Mr Phil Hughes had written pointing out the bike rack on Market Hill gardens was ugly and looked out of place and asking if it would be possible to position it elsewhere. Members agreed they were happy for it to be moved and Cllr Hay suggested offering it to one of the sports clubs with the warning that it was the property of the County Council and they might claim it back in future.

Cllr Hay had received copies of the old and new grass cutting maps for Chatteris and suggested if councillors were concerned about an area which had been missed they should contact Mr Hughes and request the maps. Cllrs Hay and Ashley had concerns about areas in New Road and Cllr Smith was worried about a cut through from London Road to Eastwood.

**L22 21/22 Any Matters Arising from Last Meeting of Group**

L16 Bus Services: Cllr Ashley reported that Age UK were looking to open the day centre at Lyons Court again and were appealing for volunteers to help at the day centre. However she was concerned at the cost of attending the day centre, £13, which she felt was too expensive for elderly people even though it included a meal. Cllr Smith suggested the group should be looking for grants to help with costs.

The Clerk reported that she was awaiting confirmation from FACT that they could launch the monthly bus service to Peterborough on the 4<sup>th</sup> September. Once this was confirmed she would advertise the service.

L13) Renaissance works: Cllr Smith asked about the progress of the Renaissance Project and was informed that Cabletest had finished painting the FDC-owned lampposts and CCTV columns but Balfour Beatty were having difficulties completing the painting of the County Council-owned columns as cars were parked in the way. The Clerk and Financial Officer would be putting up signs asking people not to park blocking access to the columns. The re-painting and repair of street furniture had been scheduled to take place at the end of July but had been delayed and businesses were undertaking repairs and re-painting of their premises. Cllr Smith asked if the Post Office had requested a grant as the sorting office was currently

being re-painted. The Clerk confirmed they had been offered a grant but had not taken up the offer.

### **L23 21/22 Little Acre Fen Pocket Park & Old Railway Line Update**

Cllr Carney said FLAPP had been offered some laurel bushes for the Pocket Park but had declined the offer as the park was at capacity for trees and bushes. He suggested putting trees that were offered along the Old Railway Line. Cllr Smith warned they would need to be larger trees to survive and it was agreed they should be planted well away from the footpath/track to ensure they were not destroyed when the County Council contractors cut the grass alongside the footpath.

Cllr Smith said it had been suggested that another bench was needed at the Pocket Park but she was not in favour and Cllr Carney pointed out large tree logs had been provided as seating as it was not a manicured, municipal park.

The Clerk agreed to enquire about progress on the information board for the park.

### **L24 21/22 Speakers: Rights of Way Volunteers Rosemarie & Abraham Coetzer**

Cllr Smith welcomed new Rights of Way Volunteers for Chatteris, Rosemarie and Abraham Coetzer. Members introduced themselves and then held an informal chat about footpaths and rights of way in Chatteris.

Cllr Gowler said he had set up a Facebook page – Chatteris Footpaths & Walking – as he had decided to walk the many footpaths around Chatteris to see what state they were in. The Facebook page now had 700 to 800 members and Cllrs Smith and Carney had helped with the admin. The page gave residents the opportunity to report problems. Whilst most people appeared to use the Old Railway Line Footpath and Bridleway, Cllr Gowler was keen to see people exploring other walks around the town.

Mrs Coetzer said they had concerns about a footpath which ran alongside the Old Railway Line and was run down because the path had been destroyed by tractors. Cllr Gowler explained there should be footpaths on either side of the river and whilst the one on the east side was not too bad the one on the west was a ploughed field. Signposts were also missing and Cllr Gowler expressed a hope that the new owners of Bartletts site would be aware of the footpaths and the need to maintain them.

Cllr Gowler said many footpaths weren't well marked and Mrs Coetzer said there often weren't any poles which could be used for signs but she did promise to check out sites where waymarking was lacking, particularly near the 16 Foot bank. She explained that she did have round directional discs and believed the Rights of Way Officer could supply poles but help would be needed in installing them.

Cllr Carney believed some walks would be more popular if they were properly signed.

Cllr Smith thanked Mr and Mrs Coetzer for taking on the role of Rights of Way Volunteers and offered help if needed. Mrs Coetzer said she and her husband enjoyed walking and were keen to make it more accessible.

Cllr Ashley said her son ran along many of the footpaths and was able to report back if they were blocked, cut off, etc. Cllr Gowler said he was keen to protect the many miles of footpaths around Chatteris as it was difficult and expensive to establish new footpaths and cycleways. It was relatively inexpensive to put up signs and he and Cllr Smith spoke about the possibility and desirability of putting up a map showing all the footpaths and creating a booklet.

Cllr Carney asked Mrs Coetzer if part of her remit was to look into permissible footpaths and Mrs Coetzer said it would be possible to flag up areas with the Rights of Way officer. Cllr Carney mentioned the footpath from Honeysome to the 40 Foot bank which was a vital link for the full circular walk around Chatteris. She offered to work together with the Town Council to solve any problems. Cllr Hay offered to help with any issues which involved the County Council.

Mr and Mrs Coetzer were thanked for attending the meeting and it was agreed to keep open dialogue on footpath issues.

## **L25 21/22 Queen's Platinum Jubilee Celebrations**

The Clerk had researched closing roads for a Street Party and had noted the links on the County Council website to a form to complete along with example documents for a traffic management plan, risk assessment, consultation letter and notification letter. Street parties were only permitted to take place on quiet residential streets that did not affect the wider road network.

It was agreed the Town Council could direct anyone thinking about organising a street party to the form and information but Councillors were not in favour of offering a grant towards the cost of organising such a party.

However, Councillors were prepared to consider offering a grant to organisations who were planning an event provided it was open to all, and not just members, and was spent on infrastructure/entertainment. The grant could not be spent on food or drink and receipts for expenditure would have to be submitted.

Before any such offer of financial help was made, it was agreed that the Council should ask if any organisations had plans to organise an event to mark the Jubilee. If events were planned the Council could then consider the size of the grant pot and the maximum sum which could be applied for. Cllr Hay suggested those who had shown an early interest should be top of the queue.

## **L26 21/22 Middle Level Moorings Plans**

Cllr Haggata had alerted the Council to a survey being carried out by the Middle Level Commissioners regarding the provision of moorings on their waterway system which included the Chatteris area. There was a proposal to create a mooring at Leonard Childs (Carters) Bridge and Middle Level were seeking the views of residents about suggested mooring sites.

Cllr Smith suggested a site nearer Chatteris might be better, such as the Old Docks area. Cllr Gowler was in favour of both sites and pointed out the emerging Local Plan would see more development on the outskirts of the town and would open up the potential to use Carters Bridge as a mooring point. Both sites would help to attract visitors to the town in search of supplies.

Cllr Smith was keen to ensure there were measures in place to stop boats mooring up for a long time and Cllr Carney explained that the Middle Level Commissioners had recently become a fee charging authority which gave them the ability to police the waterways and enforce mooring times so boats were not allowed to overstay their welcome.

Cllr Smith encouraged the council to support plans for moorings. She said there was a meeting planned with a representative from Middle Level on the 31<sup>st</sup> August to discuss the moorings project.

## **L27 21/22 Any Other Business**

Museum: Cllr Hay reported she had finally managed to set up a new bank account for the Museum Trust.

Metalcraft: Cllr Hay also reported that she had been invited to a ground breaking ceremony for the new Stainless Metalcraft training centre on the 30<sup>th</sup> July.

Bridleway: The Clerk had been contacted by a group of horse riders (with the Facebook page Horsepoo Cambridgeshire) who were keen to get in contact with those interested in maintaining Rights of Way. It was agreed the Clerk should reply and ask the author to continue to use the Town Council's email as the point of contact and any information would then be distributed to councillors and other interested parties – such as Mr and Mrs Coetzer.

## **L28 21/22 Date of Next Meeting**

Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> September 2021.