

CHATTERIS TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes Dated 5th April 2022

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Minutes of a meeting of Chatteris Town Council held on Tuesday 5th April 2022 at the Council Chambers, 14 Church Lane, Chatteris.

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

243) To Accept Apologies for Absence

An apology for absence had been received from Cllr J Carney.

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

Cllrs Benney & Murphy (when he joined the meeting) declared an interest in all planning matters as a member of FDC's planning committee.

245) Open Forum

Two members of the public were present (one of whom was recording the meeting) and were invited to speak by the Mayor but declined the offer.

246) Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 1st March 2022 were agreed and signed by the Mayor as a correct record.

247) Matters Arising from the Minutes

All matters arising from the minutes were on the agenda.

248) Police Matters

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

'Local Police

Members had a copy of the confidential report of the meeting between Sgt Joe Punton and local Council chairmen and Mayors (including the Chatteris Mayor) held on the 3rd March 2022. The next meeting had been due to take place on the 6th April but had been cancelled by Sgt Punton, due to work commitments. He did however send through to the Mayor a

confidential police update including crime and incident statistics and members had received a copy of the update.

Neighbourhood Alert

3/3/22: Notification that a man was sentenced to a community order and curfew for racially abusing his neighbour in Peterborough.

7/3/22: Neighbourhood Watch Our News newsletter for March.

8/3/22: Warning that there had been a large number of instances where tools had been stolen from vans across Cambridgeshire.

10/3/22: Warning about the theft of catalytic converters in the area.

21/3/22: Advice on how to protect your home from burglars.'

249) FDC, Street Scene and CCTV Updates

Members had a copy of the FDC, Street Scene and CCTV Updates (**copy attached**). Cllr Haggata had reported a problem with the contents of a skip littering the pavement in New Road. The Street Scene officer had investigated and Cllr Haggata confirmed the problem had been solved.

250) Financial Officer's Report

Financial Statement

Members had before them a budgetary control statement for the Revenue (Precept) Account as at 29th March 2022 showing expenditure of £233,485.91 and income of £581,932.95 (included a full year's precept income) compared with budgets, along with a bank reconciliation statement and a summary statement of reserves and funds balances.

Members were advised that, the income included the Growing Fenland advance drawdown grant money for the purchase of the premises and lease at 2 Park Street, as agreed in the contract and specified as a requirement from solicitors.

Financial Regulations Update

Members were reminded that at the March meeting the Financial Officer advised that the Financial Regulations were due to be updated and would be drafted ready for approval at the April meeting. Since then, NALC had advised that some amendments were to be made in the procurement section regarding removal of EU references which were no longer relevant following Brexit.

The Financial Officer advised Members that as soon as NALC issued its updated Financial Regulations she would update the Council's Financial Regulations accordingly.

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

251) To Agree Continuation of Payments by Bacs, Chaps, Variable Direct Debits & Standing Orders.

The Financial Officer advised Members that under the Financial Regulations Nos. 6.7, 6.8 and 6.9 the approval of the use of Bacs or Chaps, variable direct debits and standing orders to process payments should be renewed by resolution of the Council at least every two years.

The Financial Officer advised Members that direct debits were used to pay utility bills, photocopier lease, etc. Currently no standing orders were set up on the banking system and any future standing order requests would be reported individually for approval at the appropriate monthly Council meeting.

The Financial Officer proposed that Members should approve by resolution to renew the use of payments by Bacs, Chaps, variable direct debits and standing orders as per the Financial Regulations No 6.7, 6.8 and 6.9;

It was **RESOLVED** that the report be noted and approved. (Cllr Petrou left the meeting at this point and Cllr Murphy joined the meeting).

252) Payment of Accounts

It was **RESOLVED** that the payment of the following accounts be noted and approved: -
Up to end of March 2022 payments made for the Financial Year 2021/22

British Gas	Gas bill	309.99
Onecom	March Phone bill	70.28
C Day	Deposit for materials and labour for new side door	185.00
Zen Internet	Website	11.99
King Edward Centre	Hire of Annexe for High Sheriff visit	25.00
CPRE	Renewal of membership	36.00
R Savage	Town sign	181.57
Rose Fire & Security	Fire Alarm service	281.45
Cllr Ashley	Reim: Mayors Gift Vouchers re school band	60.00
The Old Bakery	Growing Fenland business premises grant	39.00
Youths of Fenland	Outreach Detached youth work	1,145.50
M J Ashley	Reim: materials re: Covid Caterpillar	37.21
M J Ashley	Reim: Picket fence costs re: Covid Caterpillar	31.96
FDC	Midsummer Festival 2021 Contribution	2,100.00
Clerk	Reim: Zoom	14.39
Viking	Stationary Order	639.59
Total		5,168.93

It was **RESOLVED** that the payment of the following accounts be noted and approved: -
Payments from 1st April for the Financial Year 22/23

Barclays	Bank Charges Feb-Mar 22 (debtor)	8.50
R J Warren	Gardening Services Mar (debtor)	727.50
Hair on the Park	Growing Fenland Business premises grant	4,366.08
Harsith Chudasama	Purchase of stage re Summer Festival	500.00
Capalc	Affiliation fee	1,323.47
Gallagher/Came & Co	Insurance Renewal	1,923.65
C A Chubbock	Annual Allotment Rent	275.00
Clerk	Payroll April	2,652.54
Financial Officer	Payroll April	1,546.15
HMRC	Payroll April	1,828.58
Cambis Pensions	Payroll April	1,382.50
Financial Officer	Reim Petty cash	64.74
Total		16,598.71

253) Grants to Voluntary Organisations

Members were reminded that the Council's current policy was to consider grant applications at the April, July, October and January meetings each year. Budget limitations meant that grants given by the Council were an expression of support for an organisation and were not at a level where, on their own, they could sustain a group's financial viability. The approved budget for grants in **2022/23 was £4,000.**

There were separate approved budgets set in 2022/23 for the following: -

	£
Chatteris King Edward Centre – Staffing contribution	8,000
Chatteris Museum Trust	4,500
Chatteris Christmas Lights Committee	10,000
Chatteris Town in Bloom	5,000
Chatteris Youth Service Provision	4,500
Chatteris Town in Bloom Paid Watering service	1,000
Summer Children's Fun	1,500
Summer Festival Contribution	4,000
Connections Bus Youth Provision	5,400

Applications for consideration by Members at the meeting were scheduled, with recommendations.

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Organisation

Recommended Grant

1. Chatteris Library Summer Reading Challenge Grant requested towards running costs & resources	£350
2. Firefighters Charity Grant towards running costs to support Firefighters and their families offering them specialist lifelong support empowering individuals to achieve mental, physical and social wellbeing throughout their lives.	£300

Members **resolved to approve** the grants as set out above.

254) To Agree Youth Work Provision from April 2022

Members had received the following report from the Clerk.

Background

Chatteris Town Council has been funding two forms of youth work in Chatteris: a youth club for younger children held at the King Edward Centre every other Thursday, term time only, and outreach work with older children, which has been running since January. As part of the outreach work the youth workers have been engaging with young people outside the Emmanuel Church on Wednesdays after school, supplying them with refreshments (in particular hot chocolate). This has proved to be very popular and has enabled engagement with the youth.

Both forms of youth work provision are due to run until the Easter holidays and the Mayor, Clerk and Financial Officer have been looking at provision from the 19th April onwards.

Members may recall that at the December 2021 meeting of the Council it was agreed that Youths of Fenland would take over running the junior youth club sessions from April 2022 to March 2023, at a total cost of £2,437.05 for 21 sessions. The Council would also pay for the hire of the King Edward Centre. It was also agreed that Youths of Fenland would deliver the detached youth work until April 2022 in place of the Connections Bus.

Current Position

Connections Bus have confirmed they do not have the capacity to bring the youth bus to Chatteris for the summer term and the town is currently on a waiting list. There is a slight possibility that Connections Bus might be able to offer something with the youth van.

As you will see from the attached report Youths of Fenland are regularly engaging with up to 50 young people when they serve refreshments outside the Emmanuel Church and they wish to continue offering the well-being drop-in café for the summer term but cut out the outreach work (which is less successful) and increase the opening time of the drop-in café.

They also wish to move the junior youth club from the King Edward Centre to the Chatteris Children's Centre on a Wednesday as they do not pay for the Children's Centre and they

already run a youth club for children aged 11+ on a Wednesday at the venue. This is currently funded by Clarion Housing. The argument is that running both groups at the same venue will not only allow easier transition for the children but will cut costs, as travel expenses are already covered by Clarion and set up time will be reduced. The proposal is to run the junior youth club weekly for 40 weeks at a total cost of £3,300 (which is below the budget of £4,500).

Proposal

Youths of Fenland's proposal is to offer the following on a Wednesday:

Well Being Café	15.00 to 17.00	Emmanuel Church
Youth Group (aged 7-13 yrs)	17.30 to 19.00	Chatteris Children's Centre
Youth Group (aged 13-16 yrs)	19.15 to 20.45	Chatteris Children's Centre

The first two sessions would be funded by Chatteris Town Council at a cost of £106.15 (café) and £82.50 (youth group) per session, total cost per session £188.65. The cost for the 14 weeks of the summer term would be £2,641.10, which is well within budget.

Recommendation

Chatteris Town Council agrees to appoint Youths of Fenland to run the Well Being Café at a cost of £106.15 per session and the junior youth club at a cost of £82.50 per session.

The Council agrees to run the café for 14 weeks, initially, and the junior youth club for 40 weeks.'

Members agreed with the recommendation and **resolved** to:

- 1) Appoint Youths of Fenland to run the Well Being Café at a cost of £106.15 per session and the junior youth club at a cost of £82.50 per session.
- 2) Run the café for 14 weeks, initially, and the junior youth club for 40 weeks.

255) Planning

Cllr Haggata (Chairman) presented the minutes of the Planning Working Group meeting held on Tuesday 29th March 2022 (**copy attached**). (Cllrs Benney and Murphy left the room for the duration of this agenda item).

Members ratified the group's recommendations on applications a) to g)) (as shown on the **appended list**) and considered three further applications.

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

- a) Support (Cllr Gowler declared an interest)
- b) Support
- c) Support
- d) Noted
- e) Support
- f) Support

- g) Support
- h) Support but request that as part of planning gain one of the conditions of permission should be that the roadway as far as the Little Acre Fen Pocket Park is made up to an agreed standard (members pointed out this would improve public access to open space and the Old Railway Line footpath)
- i) Fully Support and welcome addition of crossing
- j) Support

P43) Street Naming Womb Farm Development: The Clerk had submitted the Working Groups suggested road names and had been informed only the fire service had to be consulted on the suggestions. They disagreed with Cornfields as there was already a Cornfields in Doddington and it was agreed to change the suggestion to Oatfields. As a result the spine road off Doddington Road would be called Fillenham Way and off that road would be Wheatfields, Barley Close and Oatfields. The spine road off Fenland Way would be called Vermuyden Way and off it would be Plough Close and Peat Lane.

256) Growing Fenland Project Update

The Financial Officer and the Clerk reported there was unfortunately still no completion date for the purchase of the former Barclays Bank but the good news was that the Combined Authority had transferred the money for the purchase to the Town Council's bank account.

The Financial Officer said the leaseholder was ready to go having answered all the Council's solicitors questions but there was a hold up with the purchase of the freehold as there was a problem with the title deeds at land registry. The freeholder had instructed his solicitor to sort the problem.

The Clerk reported that the architect had drawn up a schedule of works for the conversion of 2 Park Street and she and the Financial Officer had made a few recommendations before the schedule was sent out to local building firms. Cllr Benney would also be going through the schedule of works with the solicitor.

Renaissance grants were still being given out to businesses improving their premises and the final street furniture works were underway. Cllr Smith pointed out a smart town attracted people and businesses.

The Clerk said the new town sign would be unveiled at a ceremony to mark the completion of the street furniture works which would hopefully be attended by the Mayor of Chatteris and the Combined Authority Mayor.

257) Proposed New Electoral Arrangements for Fenland District Council

Members had a copy of correspondence from the Local Government Boundary Commission on proposals to alter the boundaries for council wards in Fenland. The aim was to cut out

electoral inequality by ensuring each councillor had as even a number of electors as possible (taking into account future housing developments).

It was proposed there should be 42 councillors on Fenland District Council, an increase of 3, and instead of the four single member wards in Chatteris (Wenneye, Slade Lode, Birch and The Mills) there would be two three councillor wards – Chatteris North & Manea and Chatteris South. The Chatteris North and Manea ward would comprise the existing Birch and Manea wards and the northern part of the Slade Lode ward. Chatteris South would comprise the Mills and Wenneye wards along with the southern part of the Slade Lode ward, The only change to the Town Council would be that Birch, The Mills and Wenneye would each continue to be served by 3 town councillors but Slade Lode would be split into Slade Lode North (2 councillors) and Slade Lode south (1 Councillor).

A consultation on the proposals was taking place until 6th June. Members did not wish to comment on the proposals and Cllr Murphy warned that the Electoral Boundary Commission would have the final say.

258) Leisure and General Purposes Working Group Report & Recommendations

Cllr Smith (Chairman) presented the minutes of the Leisure and General Purposes Working Group meeting held on the 21st March 2022 (**copy attached**).

L73) Play Areas: Cllr Murphy confirmed that work to the Huntingdon Road play area was complete and Larham Way was nearing completion. FDC would be putting up a fence between the play area and the house being rebuilt for safety reasons. The Clerk said FDC were seeking a quote to re-paint the Huntingdon Road teen shelter. Councillors said the bench in the High Street was looking tired and in need of repair but it was not the responsibility of FDC. Cllr Benney pointed out it did not adhere to standards.

L74) Caterpillar Trail: Cllr Smith confirmed that the covid caterpillar stones trail had been constructed by Cllr Ashley's husband who would be putting a small picket fence around it. An explanation about the trail would go on the board.

L74) Renaissance Project: The Clerk had asked FDC about refurbishment of the street name signs and had been informed that the cost of refurbishing the signs was in excess of replacement as they needed testing/analysing for old lead paint. If lead paint was identified the signs would need to be removed from the building and prepared for painting in a controlled environment. The FDC officer was looking for a steer on the way forward. Councillors were strongly opposed to the idea of replacing cast iron street name plates with plastic signs pointing out heritage signs would be lost and they agreed to argue for the signs to be retained and repaired. They suggested the risk of lead poisoning was very low.

L75) Pond: The Clerk reported she had put forward the idea that the pond at Whitemill Road might be suitable to be restored under the Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group's funded pond conservation project. FWAG had asked for more details and it appeared to meet most of the criteria, especially as it was very neglected. The only draw-back might be its location in

relation to other ponds. FWAG were sending out an officer to inspect the pond on the 12th April. Members said there were other ponds at Nightlayers and off the A142.

L75) Trees: The Clerk had contacted the Chairman of the Football Club pointing out once again that the trees on their land which bordered the Old Railway Line footpath were in need of urgent attention. The Chairman had agreed to ask someone to take a look and take any relevant actions. She had also asked if there were any grants available to help with the works.

L77) Entrance signs: The Highways officer had rejected Cllr Carney's designs for new entrance signs as being too wordy. Cllr Carney was gathering evidence to argue his case.

L78) Platinum Jubilee Arrangements: Members had received a copy of the programme of events in Chatteris for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee. All that was missing from the list was a yard sale on the Saturday.

L79) FACT Bus: The Transport Manager for FACT had notified the Clerk she was leaving the position and handing over to a colleague. She asked if the Council had any plans to start up the Chatteris to Peterborough service on a Saturday or if there were any other plans. The Mayor suggested she, Cllr Haggata and the Clerk should meet again with FACT to discuss services and asked for suggestions for possible services. A discussion took place on the merits of bus services and if they were needed with councillors arguing for and against. Lack of advertising by Stagecoach was mentioned as was the idea of using an incentive for people to use the buses. Cllr Hay agreed to enquire how the V2 service to St Ives was going. It was agreed to discuss ideas for FACT bus services at the leisure meeting.

259) Annual Town Meeting

Members were reminded that the annual town meeting would take place at the King Edward Centre on Friday 29th April 2022 at 7pm. Councillors had received a copy of Cllr Carney's Powerpoint presentation on the Growing Fenland project which would be shown at the meeting. Refreshments would be served.

260) Midsummer Festival Update

The Clerk informed members that the Festival would be held on the 25th and 26th June at Furrowfields Recreation Ground. The theme was Fairy Tales and Folklore and entry would be just £1 each day.

As usual the Festival would begin with a walking parade at 11am on the Saturday. After much chasing three bands were lined up (two samba and one drum corps) along with Morris dancers and stilt walkers. All that was needed was for local groups to commit to parade; some had already signed up.

On the field those in the parade would perform in arena along with the Dog and Duck Show, which had appeared on TV. There would be music in the marquee, a story teller, fun fair, inflatables, stalls, a fairy crown making workshop and hopefully a bubble workshop.

The Festival committee was hiring in a proper stage for the evening when there would be a disco and music from Scooted and Booted at the Party in the Park.

On the Sunday there would be the dog show, the colour fun run (which was so popular in 2021), cream teas, an animal experience and music from Isle Ave a Shanty.

The Clerk finished by reminding members that a small (all female) committee organised the Festival and they were looking for help at the Festival particularly on the gate on the Saturday and Sunday.

(Cllr Newell left the meeting at this point).

261) Chatteris Museum Heritage Lottery Bid

Members had received a copy of a letter from Mrs Nicky Stockman about her work with Chatteris Museum on a Heritage Lottery Bid. The bid was for funding to support outreach activities and curate a community lead exhibition for the grand museum re-opening at the end of 2022. The bid was called Chatteris Twenties and aimed to research and re-create aspects of the town in the 1920s. A large part of the project would be to work with schools and community groups to interrogate the newly launched 1921 census to produce an exhibition entitled “Who Lived in My House?”

In addition to the exhibition the plan was to run activities at the Christmas Lights Switch On and the final project celebration at the 2023 Midsummer Festival. The Clerk confirmed the Festival Committee had agreed the theme for 2023 would be ‘The Roaring Twenties’ to fit in with the project.

Mrs Stockman said the bid was strengthened by “in-kind” match funding and asked if the Council Chambers could occasionally be used for research sessions and meetings. She also asked if the Town Council would write a letter of support for the bid. Members **agreed** to both requests.

(Cllrs Benney and Gowler left the meeting at this point).

262) Traffic Issues

Closures: The Council had been informed that Mepal viaduct would now be closed for repairs on the weekends of 13-16th May, 20th to 23rd May and 27th to 30th May. The Council had also been notified of the road closures for the Midsummer Festival parade and plans to shut Stocking Drove for works on the 9th to 11th May.

Reports: The latest Highways events diary had been received, as had the IHMC incident report for February (which included the offer of training for councillors on how to use the one.network map), information about planned roadworks and events in Chatteris in March and April and the Ouse Washes Section 10 works stakeholder update.

263) Correspondence

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

The Clerk had also been notified that the Parish Church was planning to set up a hub for Ukrainian refugees. Cllr Hay asked if the Town Council should be doing anything and the Clerk said she had already made the offer of help to the vicar. Cllr Hay said she had offered a home to a family of three and Cllr Taylor said he had offered to take a refugee child. Cllr Murphy said it was the responsibility of the local authority if a placement broke down. (Cllr Smith left the meeting at this point).

Cambridgeshire Search and Rescue: Cllr Murphy said Cambridgeshire Search and Rescue's plans to install recycling bins was dependent on using council car parks, FDC would not be installing them on their land as they had to be in place for a minimum of two years and it would be up to FDC to upkeep the area while the charity took the money. In addition there were already recycling bins at Furrowfields car park and the fire station. It was agreed it would be better to donate money directly to charities helping with the Ukraine crisis.

Cllr Ashley asked Cllr Murphy if there were plans to repair the tap at the cemetery which had been blocked off when it became faulty. Cllr Murphy admitted he was unsure when the repair would be carried out.

264) Reports

Cllr Haggata had submitted the minutes of the Transport and Access Group meeting he attended on the 28th March.

265) Items for the Next Agenda

No items were put forward for the next agenda.