

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

Minutes of a meeting held at the Council Chambers on Tuesday 11th October 2022

Present: Cllrs A Charrier (Chairman), L Ashley and A Gowler. Cllr F Newell joined via Zoom.

L29 22/23 Apologies for Absence

Cllrs J Carney, A Hay and J Smith sent apologies for absence.

L30 22/23 Speakers: Mrs Barbara and Mr Phil Couldridge

Mr and Mrs Couldridge were welcomed to the meeting and said they wished to discuss two ideas with the Council. The first related to bus services.

Mr Couldridge pointed out the town did not have an internal bus service to enable residents to access the doctors' surgery, supermarkets, town centre shops, etc. He asked if it would be possible to have mini buses providing a service around the town.

Cllr Charrier pointed out FACT ran a bus to Tesco's on a Friday which was not well used and Mrs Couldridge said a bus to Aldi's would be more popular. Cllr Gowler explained the funding for the bus originally came from Tesco's.

Mr Couldridge said as organiser of the Community Car Scheme in Chatteris he realised many people could not get about in the town. Often it was too far to walk into the centre of the town. Other neighbouring towns had buses which had a route around the town.

Cllr Gowler said the town was struggling to keep any bus services as Stagecoach were set to withdraw all services by the end of the month but he admitted FACT would be the obvious choice to run a mini bus service around town. Cllr Charrier said the idea could be raised at a scheduled meeting with FACT due to take place on the 21st October. Cllr Ashley said the service would have to run on certain days at certain times and when the money lodged with FACT ran out the service would probably have to end.

Mr Couldridge suggested making a small charge for the service so it could continue longer. He mentioned the bus serving schools but Cllr Ashley assured him that any child unable to walk to school would already be transported by a bus or taxi.

It was agreed that the service would have to be well advertised and Centrepoint would help to get the message out. Mrs Couldridge said if residents had to ring and book the bus it would put them off. A route with pick up times was needed.

Cllr Charrier suggested there could be a continual loop on a Friday around the town and suggested calling it the Chatteris Runner. A list of places it should call was drawn up including the new garden centre. There was a suggestion that two routes might be needed.

Cllr Gowler began to plot a route with pick up and drop off points.

Mr and Mrs Couldridge also raised the idea of moving the market to Furrowfields. The Clerk explained residents had always been firmly against the idea of moving the market and Cllr Gowler said the problems with the market in Park Street should be alleviated when the parking difficulties were alleviated. If motorists adhered to waiting times and stopped parking all day in the High Street and Park Street this would allow more motorists to park near shops and the market and improve trading.

Mr and Mrs Couldridge were thanked for attending and left the meeting. Cllr Newell also left the meeting as she felt unwell.

L31 22/23 FACT Bus Services

It was agreed to raise the idea of the Chatteris Runner bus with FACT and to make a charge of £1 initially, if they were able to run a trial.

The Clerk reported that FACT had stated the Cambridge bus was going well but the Tesco's bus was not a success hence the call for a meeting to discuss the service provision. Cllr Ashley said she would be raising the idea of more buses to Cambridge in the run up to Christmas so residents could go Christmas shopping. She suggested running the buses on a Tuesday.

FACT had reported that the Gables had booked one of their free journeys and would be taking residents to Welney for the day in November. They were very grateful for the opportunity.

L32 22/23 Little Acre Fen Pocket Park & Old Railway Line Updates

The Clerk said she would chase the contractors Warren's for a start date for the extension works to the Old Railway Line footpath made up surface. The footpath would be closed for two weeks while the work was underway.

The Clerk had also met with representatives of the Probation Service as she had ordered 50 free trees and 50 hedging plants for the Pocket Park and the Old Railway Line footpath. These would be planted by those undertaking unpaid work as part of a community sentence. She would liaise with FLAPP about where they should go. The probation supervisor had also recommended ordering 50 whips, which would grow into large trees, and planting them on a spare allotment until they grew large enough to be transplanted.

Cllr Ashley was delighted to announce that Chatteris In Bloom had received a gold in the Britain In Bloom competition and head gardener Thor had received a commendation.

L33 22/23 Polling Districts & Polling Places Review

Members discussed the Polling Districts and Polling Places review being conducted by Fenland District Council following the Local Government Boundary Commission review which had altered polling districts for Fenland District Council.

Under the new warding system for Fenland District Council Chatteris would be represented by 3 councillors in Chatteris South and 3 councillors in the Chatteris North and Manea ward. There would be five wards for Chatteris Town Council – Birch (3 councillors), The Mills (3), Wenneye (3), Slade Lode North (2) and Slade Lode South (1). (This was as a result of the Slade Lode ward being split between the Chatteris North and South wards for FDC).

The polling stations being suggested were:

Chatteris Library (if unavailable the Bricstan Room) - Chatteris North and Manea (FDC) and Birch (CTC).

Quaker Way Residents Room (if unavailable Chatteris Children's Centre) – Chatteris North and Manea FDC) & Chatteris South (FDC); Slade Lode North (CTC) and Slade Lode South (CTC).

The Masonic Hall (if unavailable the King Edward Centre) – Chatteris South (FDC) and The Mills (CTC).

The Emmanuel Church (if unavailable the King Edward Centre) – Chatteris South (FDC) and Wenneye (CTC).

Manea Village Hall (if unavailable the British Legion Club) – Chatteris North & Manea (FDC).

Cllr Ashley said the King Edward Centre was no longer available as it was fully booked and it was recommended that the community room at the Fire Station or the Salvation Army Fortress be considered as alternatives.

L34 22/23 Fenland Cycling, Walking & Mobility Aid Improvement Strategy

The Clerk had a copy of the Strategy suggestions for Chatteris which went to FDC's cabinet meeting on the 3rd October.

There were a large number of proposals from dropped kerbs and removal of parking on pavements to improving pedestrian crossings over the bypass and 20mph speed zones for schools. Whilst members did not disagree with the findings they did query how all the suggestions would be funded.

L35 22/23 Any Other Business

There was no other business.

L36 22/23 Date of Next Meeting

Tuesday 15th November, 2022.

