

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

**Minutes of a meeting held at the Council Chambers, 14 Church Lane, Chatteris, on Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> March 2025**

**Present:** Cllrs V Joyce (Chairman), L Ashley, A Hay, J Fuller-Gray, S Selman, M Siggee and S Unwin.

**L56 24/25 Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence had been received from Cllrs A Gowler and A Jones.

**L57 24/25 Any Matters Arising from the Last Meeting of the Group**

L53: VE Day 80<sup>th</sup>: The Clerk had been contacted by the RBL to say they now planned to hold a service to mark the 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary of VE Day at the War Memorial at 2pm on the 8<sup>th</sup> May. This would be followed by an afternoon tea (open to everyone) in the Bricstan Hall. Tickets would be £5 a head. The RBL had asked if the church bells would be rung, and the Clerk said she would enquire. Cllr Unwin confirmed the Community Choir would sing for an hour before the beacon lighting at 9.30pm. Cllr Joyce would be responsible for the lighting and Cllr Unwin and the Clerk would be on fire-fighting duties.

L54: Bobby Scheme: In response to the Clerk's email, an organiser of the Bobby Scheme had stated the group was looking to raise additional funds to support vulnerable adults who fell outside their remit and to purchase a van for visits. The Clerk said it appeared to be a grant application so she would pass it to the Financial Officer. Another organiser had sent a form to be completed by groups who were interested in a talk on the Bobby Scheme. Cllr Ashley offered to pass the forms on to groups who might be interested. Cllr Unwin spoke again about the good work undertaken by the scheme. Cllr Joyce asked how the scheme was funded; it was believed to be through grants.

**L58 24/25 Little Acre Fen Pocket Park & Old Railway Line Updates**

Cllr Joyce said the park was in need of a bit of tidying. The Clerk said the bins were now being emptied regularly and monthly cuts would soon begin. There was concern about drug activity at the park but the Clerk said it was not enough of a problem for the police to install CCTV camera in the area.

**L59 24/25 Land At Old Auction Yard**

The Clerk had written to the Crown Estate regarding the state of the trees on the land at the Old Auction Yard, asking for urgent action.

However, the Crown Estate representative had replied saying that there was no information in relation to the land and the land appeared to be unregistered. It was necessary to establish

beyond reasonable doubt that the land was escheat before the Crown Estate would consider dealing with it.

The email asked for evidence that the land was escheat. If this was not possible the email suggested instructing a solicitor to trace the owner of the land or directing the enquiry to the Treasury Solicitor at the Government Legal Department if the property (land) was vested in the Treasury Solicitor as bona vacantia (vacant goods).

Members were not in favour of instructing a solicitor but agreed a letter should go to the Treasury Solicitor and in the meantime the Clerk should ask FDC's tree officer to examine the trees because if they were a danger to the public FDC had a duty of care and would have to take action.

### **L60 24/25 New Events & Future Plans**

New Events: A resident had sent an email saying he had an idea for more events in the town, such as a bike meet for motorbikes. It was agreed to go back and say the Town Council was unable to organise more events but he was welcome to get a group of volunteers together and organise an event.

Volunteers: Cllr Joyce said there had been a meeting for organisations seeking volunteers at the King Edward Centre on Saturday and over 20 organisations had attended but there was a limited number of people who turned up looking for volunteering opportunities. It was suggested there were a number of possible reasons for the low turnout, including people being out for the day as it was sunny and late advertising of the event.

Youths: Cllr Ashley said Mrs Louise Unwin, who was attending the volunteer event, had expressed an interest in running a youth group, through the town council. She had been inspired by a youth worker who worked with Littleport Town Council. The Clerk said it was her intention to have coffee with the Clerk at Littleport to ask her about the scheme. Littleport had benefited from the provision of a brand new youth centre which had been built using Section 106 and Cil payments from developers in the town. Cllr Ashley suggested the Sportsman field, which was owned by FDC but had formerly been owned by Chatteris Urban District Council, would be an ideal location for youth activities. Cllr Unwin agreed there was a need for activities for Cromwell-age children and she pointed out portacabins could be used for a meeting room, toilets, etc. Cllr Ashley said if there were also changing rooms the youth football teams could use the football pitch. Cllr Siggee pointed out the field would have to be surrounded by bollards. Cllr Unwin suggested resurrecting Chatteris Action for Youth to work on the project. Cllr Fuller-Gray agreed that the young people of the town needed somewhere to go and to then be given direction.

Members agreed that the best idea would be to take back ownership of the Sportsman ground, especially with local government reorganisation looming. It was hoped that the developers who were set to build in the area might help with the development of the land.

**It was agreed to recommend to the full council** that the Town Council should approach Fenland District Council requesting ownership of the Sportsman playing fields be passed to Chatteris Town Council.

#### **L61 24/25 Any Other Business**

Footpath: The Clerk said she had written to the Chair of the Highways and Transport Committee at the County Council (copying in Transport and Access at FDC) asking for the reinstatement of the footpath/cycleway along London Road from the Stocking Drove junction to Seasons Garden Centre under the Active Travel scheme. Unfortunately, she had not received a reply.

LHI: The Clerk had received drawings of a draft preliminary design for the proposed crossing improvements for the A141 Fenland Way. The design included the installation of 3 x new warning signs with associated posts and foundations and at the crossing point 16 new verge marker bollards, 4 of which were to be white to highlight either side of the crossing point. The total cost of the scheme was £13k but Highways had secured £4k funding from maintenance and along with the LHI grant and the Town Council's contribution they were confident the scheme could be delivered within the financial budget. Members were happy with the proposals and agreed the designs should be given the go ahead.

Speed Limit: The County Council had emailed with a proposal to reduce the existing speed limit on the B1050 London Road from 50mph to 30mph from its existing location southwards for 160 metres. The speed limit reduction proposal was related to the residential development on the road and would cover the new roundabout. Members had no objections to the proposal.

HMO: The Clerk reported that FDC was planning to introduce new planning controls which would mean that dwelling houses in Wisbech would need planning permission to be changed to houses of multiple occupation.

Plans: The Clerk reminded members that FDC had invited town and parish councillors to attend on-line planning training on the 25<sup>th</sup> March. The Planning Working Group had been scheduled to go ahead on that date but neither the Clerk nor the Financial Officer was likely to be around so it was agreed the meeting would be cancelled to allow councillors to attend the training. As a result, the Clerk asked for decisions on three urgent planning applications.

It was agreed the following recommendations should be submitted to FDC:

- a) F/YR25/0166/F - Works to existing dwelling involving the replacement of existing dark timber windows to white UPVC flush casement, replace timber front door to a cream composite door and change vertical cladding from dark timber to white embossed composite vertical cladding at 1A St Martins Road - *Recommend Refusal, out of keeping with the conservation area. When planning permission was granted one of the conditions was that all joinery should be softwood painted dark oak and NOT metal or plastic to safeguard the character of the building listed as being of local interest and to preserve the character of the conservation area. Another*

*condition was to retain an original timber window from the stables building which the new building replaced.*

- b) F/YR25/0179/LB External works to a listed building involving the reinstatement of 3 x timber sash windows to front elevation at 4 Wenny Road - *Support*
- c) F/YR25/0183/TRCA Works to 1 Lime tree in a conservation area at 14 St James Close – *Support*

Defibrillator: Cllr Joyce said he had sourced new bolts to allow him to fit the defibrillator in the telephone kiosk. The unit would be bolted to the metal plate with the ledge underneath as added support. Cllr Siggee suggested the kiosk would need some form of light and Cllr Joyce agreed to look into the idea of a solar-powered light.

**L61 24/25 Date of Next Meeting**

Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> April 2025.