

CHATTERIS TOWN COUNCIL
Annual Town Meeting
Minutes Dated Friday 25th April 2025

Minutes of the Chatteris Annual Town meeting held at the King Edward Centre, King Edwards Road, Chatteris, on Friday 25th April 2025.

Present: Cllr A Hay (Mayor), Cllrs L Ashley, J Fuller-Gray, A Jones, V Joyce, P Murphy, S Selman, and S Unwin, and 2 members of the public/electors.

The Mayor welcomed everyone to the meeting and said it had been an honour to represent the residents of Chatteris as Mayor over the last 12 months. She said she had attended a number of civic functions across the county.

The Mayor said the Town Council had, for the most part, worked well together. Following a recent by-election, she welcomed the latest town councillor Joanna Fuller-Gray and said she was sure Cllr Fuller-Gray would work hard for the town.

1) Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence had been received from Cllrs J Carney and M Siggee.

2) Financial Report

The Financial Officer presented her report (**copy attached**) which included a budgetary control statement for the Revenue (Precept) Account as at the 31st March 2024 showing expenditure of £442,878.12 and income of £391,052.64. She said balances showed a total of £203,738.03 (which included a full year's precept income).

The report also gave details of reserve and holding accounts and the precept budget for 2024/25 which was set at £173,500, an increase of £3,500 on the previous year. The increase was due to a rise in utility bills and other knock-on expenditure but had been kept to a minimum thanks to the Park Street tenancy rental income.

The Financial Officer said the unaudited accounts would be available for inspection from the 10th June to the 21st July. She invited questions about her report but there were none put forward.

3) Report of the Year's Activities

The Clerk presented her Annual Report of the Council's activities for the year ending April 2025 (**copy attached**).

She said during the year the Council completed the Growing Fenland Project and she was proud to say that Chatteris Town Council now owned and administered two prominent buildings in the town.

Jointly the buildings had been valued at £2.4m (for insurance purposes); wonderful assets for the town. Most importantly they were both bringing in rental incomes, from letting the first floor of both buildings. This income was helping to keep down the council tax paid by Chatteris residents, supporting local groups and organisations (such as the Christmas Lights and In Bloom) through grants and paying the running costs of the museum in its new home at 2 Park Street. The museum was going from strength to strength and was attracting record numbers of visitors with its continually changing displays and activities for children.

Four small community rooms had been created at 14 Church Lane and these were being used by Citizens Advice and the local NHS vaccination and immunisation team during the day and by local groups at night. They had also been used for hearing services during the year and it was hoped these might return, if the company who ran them could find NHS funding.

On the 21st February representatives of the Combined Authority (who funded the Growing Fenland Project), contractors who had worked on the project and local dignitaries were among those invited by the Mayor to a cheese and wine event at 14 Church Lane to celebrate the completion of the project.

The Clerk then went on to list other activities undertaken by the Council during the year.

4) Reports from Local Clubs and Organisations

Miss Anne Wells gave reports for two organisations.

She said the Royal British Legion was grateful to the Council for organising the road closures for Remembrance Sunday. Although this was officially a civic event in other towns the RBL did not get the support the Chatteris branch received from the Town Council.

Miss Wells also thanked the Council for financially supporting In Bloom and she pointed out this had helped the organisation to once again gain Gold in the regional competition. She also thanked the Clerk for helping with the necessary paperwork to get the licence to be able to put up the hanging baskets. Cllr Unwin also thanked all three tiers of local government for their help and said the success was due to working in partnership.

5) Questions from the Public

Councillors expressed disappointment at the turnout at the meeting. It was pointed out that the meeting was only ever crowded if there was a controversial topic.

Cllr Joyce pointed out it was often the case that people could not be bothered to turn out for a meeting because it was all too easy to put complaints/comments on Facebook.

