

FULL COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE FULL COUNCIL ON WEDNESDAY 10th FEBRUARY 2016 AT 7.30 AT GROSVENOR HOUSE, GROSVENOR ROAD, WHITTLESEY.

Present: Cllr Miscandlon, Boden, Bristow, Curtis, Dorling, Garratt, Mrs Jolley, Mrs Laws, Mason, Mrs Mayor

Officer in Attendance: Mrs Sue Evans – Town Clerk & RFO

Recording: DS2500.44.DS2

F20/16 To receive apologies from absent Members and the reason for the apology.

Cllr Butcher & Whitwell (prior engagement), Cllr Wicks (no reason), Cllr Mrs Windle (holiday)

F21/16. Declaration of Members Pecuniary Interests, on items to be discussed later in the agenda and the Council to decide which items are to be discussed as confidential under agenda item number F36/16.

- Approval of confidential Minute F18/16 from 13th January 2016 Meeting.
- Town Council Tenants
- WTC Grosvenor House

Councillors Mrs Laws and Miscandlon as members of FDC Planning Committee advised that should any planning applications be discussed they may comment, but reserve the right to change their minds should more information become available at a later date.

F22/16 Police matters including CCTV Report

Cllr Mrs Laws advised members that the North Bank is tide locked, therefore the road Northbank may be closed, however she has been contacted by residents recently to advise that vehicle owners have moved the barriers.

Members were furnished with the police report, members asked for clarification on whether we will see less policing as the reported stated that officers are now booking on in March or Wisbech.

Cllr Garratt advised that following a recent CCTV meeting, he was made aware that should the camera pick up incidents, these will be followed up, however there is no mention of the outcome of these issues on the reports and this would give the council knowledge that the service they pay for is value for money.

Cllr Dorling had received reports of inconsiderate parking, he had duly met with Ian Moll and been on a walk round to see any inconsiderate parking and whilst they were out some tickets were issued.

F23/16 Street Scene Officer Report

Cllr Miscandlon advised there had been some serious fly tipping on the road that goes to Bridge Farm, FDC were aware and will clear it up.

Cllr Miscandlon advised that Balfour Beatty have still not put the signs back in some of the Wards, Cllr Miscandlon will follow this up with Balfour Beatty.

Cllr Bristow advised that despite there being a good amount of bins on New Road and Mill Road, there had been an increase of dog fouling on New Road and Mill Road. The Clerk will advise the Street Scene Officer and ask if they can patrol this area.

F24/16 Presentation by Cllr Mark Buckton on Cambridgeshire Fens Tourism Partnership.

Vision

To make the Cambridgeshire Fens a destination of choice for people seeking a day out or a short break away from home.

Aims of the Partnership

- To actively and effectively promote the Cambridgeshire Fens as a tourism destination of choice
- To provide a conduit for providers within the Fenland tourism economy to promote their businesses both individually and collectively
- To provide a forum that enables local tourism providers to contribute to the development, delivery and promotion of the tourism economy within the Cambridgeshire Fens area

Action Plan 2015/16 - until 31st March 2016

***Aim:** To actively and effectively promote the Cambridgeshire Fens as a tourism destination of choice*

- Establish a comprehensive list of visitor 'attractions' and other providers within the Cambridgeshire Fens area
- Develop and publish a tourism marketing strategy and plan for the Cambridgeshire Fens
- Consult with all Town and Parish Councils within the Fenland area to explain the vision and aims of the partnership and seek their views and cooperation
- Establish links with neighbouring Tourism Boards (or similar) to identify ways of future cooperative working
- Identify opportunities for utilising local and wider media to promote the Cambridgeshire Fens as a visitor destination of choice

***Aim:** To provide a conduit for providers within the Fenland tourism economy to promote their businesses both individually and collectively*

- Establish a website 'Our Shop Front' that: a) informs visitors and potential visitors what the Cambridgeshire Fens has to offer and b) is able to offer an advertising function to providers of visitor attractions, activities and accommodation
- www.visitcambridgeshirefens.org

***Aim:** To provide a forum that enables local tourism providers to contribute to the development, delivery and promotion of the tourism economy within the Cambridgeshire Fens area*

- Develop and agree the future make-up, function, role and terms of reference for the Cambridgeshire Fens Tourism Partnership and any executive body (i.e. committee, board, etc.) that sits within it.

Any views, suggestions etc. for tourism strategy and 2016/17 plan please contact Vicki Whittingstall at FDC on vwhittingstall@fenland.gov.uk 01354 622506

Cllr Mason asked if anyone is maintaining the diary events for the system to prevent clashes of things between all the Fenland towns and villages. Cllr Buckton advised Cllr Mason to put the suggestions forward to Vicki Whittingstall.

Cllr Curtis doesn't think it works graphically and could be a bit more dynamic, but needs constant investment in the website, and needs to work with additional social media sites. Cllr Curtis agrees with promoting all the events, but feels that we do not do enough to promote fishing in the Fens. Must farm is the most important archaeological finds in the Europe. All the boats are currently being plasticised but will undoubtedly end up in other locations apart from Whittlesey and these would be a great tourist attraction

Cllr Curtis advised that local tourism is important and we should be selling Whittlesey to the Peterborough Community. If we get tourism right, more people will be in the town therefore less empty shops.

Cllr Mayor remembers 60 or more years ago, when the people of Sheffield came down when their factories were closed for a week's fishing. We must continue to promote the fishing to bring people into the town. Cllr Mrs Mayor asked for confirmation that our villages that don't have Parish Councils will be included on the Website, Cllr Buckton confirmed they will be included.

Cllr Bristow asked if there will be liaison with the Fenland Leisure as one day a year there is a massive fishing competition where they all register at the Manor Leisure centre, Cllr Garratt advised it is Whittlesey Fishing Association that organise this competition National Piking competition.

F25/16 To confirm and sign the Minutes from the meeting of the Council held on the Wednesday 13th January 2016

Ratified: proposed Cllr Dorling, seconded Cllr Mrs Jolley

F26/16 Public Forum

To allow any member of the public to address the council. Time allowed 15 minutes in total.

4 members of the public were present.

Mr Robert Boddington – Eastrea.

Market Street – All gutters are full of grass and they need tidying up, could the owners of these properties be written to.

Pigeon problems – Market Street he feels that all the property owners of the shops / building should be notified of all the issues as Clean for the Queen is coming up.

Mud Walls – The West End wall is in very poor – Cllr Mrs Laws has taken this on board and is moving forward with this.

Cycle Race – Have all forms being distributed and when will they be distributed. Cllr Mrs Laws advised that the Cllrs are volunteers and deliveries are completed when they can be.

F27/16 Information Only.

2016 – Good Councillor Guide.

F28/16 Invitations.

There are no invitations

F29/16 To receive the minutes from the Planning Meeting on Wednesday 16th December 2015.

The Minutes were received.

F30/16. To receive verbal reports from members who have attended meetings with outside bodies.

Cllr Mason – Had attended the AGM of the newly formed Whittlesey District Business, they meet every month and things are progressing, they are looking at promoting their own website to encourage people to join.

Cllr Mason had also attended the AGM of the Whittlesey Emergency Food aid and advised members that they had helped 44 families in the last three months and in the Christmas week distributed 46 hampers; they now only have 20 families on the books that require some sort of aid.

Cllr Mason also attended the Whittlesey IDB meeting, the main objective is to keep the drains and dykes well maintained and free flowing Cllr Mason advised members that the IDB are working well and within their budget for this year.

Cllr Dorling – Route 63 and Green Wheel, the key point is to prevent vehicles using the route, this could be by signage, gates, and establishing who has / does not have right of way, there is progress going on but it will be a slow process. Cllr Curtis advised that the Green Wheel from the Millennium Bridge is badly cracked and rutted and dangerous the willows are not cut back near Peterborough just before right hand bend.

Cllr Bristow and Miscandlon advised members that the Glassmore Environmental fund has three bids on the table (New Road School, Ramsey Mereside Village Hall and Coates Village Hall), New Road and Ramsey were approved, however the funding for Coates was set aside, but further clarification was required, it was suggested that they submit two bids one to cover LED lighting the other for the ceiling. Even though these three bids were approved it still left 40K in the fund, if anyone knows of projects that would be suitable, Cllr Bristow asked for the information to be passed on. The next round of applications will be June 2016.

F31/16. To discuss any planning applications received from Fenland District Council for comment including:- (these are applications that fall outside the normal meeting).

A copy of the planning decisions taken by Fenland District Council is attached – White Sheet

F/YR16/0037/TRCA - Works to 1no Beech and 1no Sycamore trees within a Conservation Area - 4A Gracious Street, Whittlesey.

The Town Council have no objection subject to the application forms for the works being completed correctly.

F/YR16/0038/O Erection of a dwelling (outline application with all matters reserved) – Land East of 51 Coates Road, Eastrea

Cllr Butcher requested further clarification as there had been a recent planning application for three dwellings and wished to know if this application superseded the previous application and has the other application been cancelled.

F/YR16/0039/F – Erection of a first floor extension to side of existing dwelling – 120 Stonald Road, Whittlesey.

The Town Council have no objection and therefore recommends approval.

F/YR16/0046/TRCA – Fell 1no Sweet Chestnut and 1 no Horse Chestnut tree within a conservation area – 9 Gracious Street, Whittlesey

Members requested that the tree specialist look at the trees on site as the tree report that is on the system is thirteen years old, if the tree officer reports that they are diseased and need to come out the council request that the trees are replaced with new trees.

F/YR16/0051/TRCA – Works to 1 White Poplar tree within a conservation area – 10 Briggate Quay, Whittlesey.

The Town Council have no objection and therefore recommend approval.

F/YR16/0054/F – Conversion of double garage to 2 x 1 bed holiday accommodation units with existing 3 bed annexe above in relation to the existing dwelling – Annexe 47 March Road, Coates.

The Town Council have no objection and therefore recommend approval, however would like it agreed with the developer that this will always be a holiday let and not ever sold as a one-bedroom apartment.

F32/16. Agenda items for Discussion.

- The Queens 90th Birthday – Whittlesey Music Festival is being advertised as ‘Picnic on the Market Place’ – to celebrate the Queen’s Birthday
- Bus update – Cllr Mason advised members that progress is being made and the following routes discussed. However, nothing yet has been finalised. Cllr Curtis added that if these services do come to fruition. There must be a campaign of ‘use it or lose it’. Cllr Mason will continue to work with the bus company on this.
 - Late night buses from Peterborough to Coates via Whittlesey leaving Queensgate at 6.30pm and 8.30pm.
 - A service running periodically from Whittlesey to Cardea Morrisons, Amazon and Ikea returning to Whittlesey via Fletton and Stanground.
 - A service similar to the one provided by a supermarket in Oundle and Thrapston whereby a bus will pick up customers from Coates, Drybread Road, The Avenues, Bellmans Estate and New Road dropping them off at Grosvenor Road and waiting for an hour and a half before returning on a reverse route. This service to operate twice daily - a.m and p.m.
- Showfield update – All members had received copies of the letter from the Secretary of State that they are not prepared to call this in. Cllr Miscandlon advised that the Section 106 has been agreed by all parties, and will be signed next week bar any technical difficulties. Cllr Mrs Laws asked whether it was true that a piece of land had to be sold to the Showfield for the development to be completed and asked why the Whittlesey Charity was selling land to the Showfield when they should be acting for the people of Whittlesey. Cllr Boden advised that they as a Charity have to act under the rules and regulations of the Charity commission. Cllr Curtis asked if the land was in the ownership of the developer at the time the application was submitted and it would need to be declared on the ABC certificate. Cllr Mrs Jolley advised members that the charity can’t actually sell the land but can sell the access in perpetuity. Cllr Boden advised that this would actually depend on the trust deed. Cllr Boden advised that there have been three major incidents lately where recommendations made by WTC have been ignored by the FDC planners and the planning process. Cllr Boden advised we do have a way forward with this and it’s the Neighbourhood Plan, he has requested that this is discussed further and put as an agenda item at the next meeting as to why the Neighbourhood Plan is needed and whether this should be put on WTC website. Cllr Mrs Laws advised part of the Neighbourhood plan is to engage with residents and we need to get a certain percentage back to move forward with the Neighbourhood Plan
- Hereward Community Rail Partnership – Cllr Mrs Mayor advised there is nothing further to report from the January meeting.
- Tour of Cambridgeshire Survey update – Cllr Whitwell was not present, but the Clerk presented members with his report on a spreadsheet giving an update on the responses so far, these were 68.1% in favour, 31.9% against.
- Town Centre Road Safety – ED – As a result of a surgery a comment was raised that the traffic going through the middle of the town centre doesn’t slow down, he would like feedback on having a 20 mph limit from the Kellyvision roundabout via Broad Street, Market Street, Eastgate through to the cemetery road roundabout. Cllr Boden doesn’t favour low speeds, however in this case he feels that these roads could be potentially dangerous, the reduced speed may not be able to be enforced by the Police due to staffing issues. However if the speeds are reduced, it does encourage people to slow down, he doesn’t feel that CCC would be able to fund this, however this could be looked at under the LHI.

- Cllr Dorling also highlighted the problem of vehicular movements on High Causeway outside of the restricted times, a meeting to be arranged with James Rigney & Les Middleton to discuss High Causeway and potential restrictions, the Mayor will also be in attendance at this meeting.
- Corporate Governance Review – Cllr Boden advised members that the Local Boundary Commission for England have finally released their results for the County Council boundaries; as a result there is a knock on effect on the town boundaries, they have stuck with their initial decision which is to split St Mary's ward into two and the North Western part 341 electors will be added to Delph Ward that sits within Whittlesey North, thus Whittlesey South will lose these, however they will gain, Benwick, Doddington and about half of the land area of the town of March. St Mary's will not benefit from two councillors however; Stonald Ward which is double the size will be reduced to one councillor. These changes can be challenged via a Corporate Governance Review, Cllr Boden suggested this is not something that is discussed now, but FDC will be asked to provide the following information that will be the start of the process that is needed.
 - For each of the town council wards that currently exist together with St Mary's North and South provide the electorates for 2016 and projected electorates 2021.

Cllr Curtis thinks the boundary commission have failed in their remit when they have undertaken this review, from a Whittlesey perspective we had until 1995 a very similar structure, with 1 county councillor designated to Whittlesey and the other County Councillor was looking after part of Whittlesey and other parishes e.g. Doddington etc, this was not viable during this time and the Councillor was unable to fulfil their duties.

- Independent Inquiry - FDC/Sainsbury – Members had all received a copy of the draft letter to go to FDC, after discussion this was proposed by Cllr Curtis, seconded Cllr Bristow, Cllr Miscandlon and Cllr Mrs Jolley abstained, all other members voted in favour, the content of the letter is detailed below:

Dear Councillor Clark,

As you are aware, the supermarket issue in Whittlesey has a long, controversial history that begins well before the two competing sites along Eastrea Road were known about. Within many in the Whittlesey community is a deep suspicion that the actions of Fenland District Council have made the situation more complicated at every turn, and many feel that there are serious questions for which they deserve answers. Moreover, it is important that for Fenland to take the strides forwards that it wishes, it learns lessons from the past. For this reason, Whittlesey Town Council wishes to support the calls for an independent investigation into the history of supermarket development in Whittlesey.

There are many questions that need answering, but we feel the following questions should be used as a basis for the person nominated to carry out the investigation:

1. Why was an apparently unviable supermarket in Station Road granted planning permission? Should greater credibility have been given to the town centre option that was supported at the time.
2. Why was the decision to overturn the refused Tesco supermarket on Eastrea Road taken? Why were apparent warnings to Fenland District Council ignored, when both Councillors and developers were aware that this action was being discussed prior to committee? Were officers aware of this option, and what action did they take to prevent it?
3. Were the reasons for officers recommending the Tesco supermarket over the Whittlesey one valid? As an example, why was the improvement in green space ignored in the officer report, when Whittlesey had a clear, recognised lack of green space in Fenland District Council's previous studies. Was the sequential test applied wrongly?

4. Why were so many decisions taken that seemed to be to the detriment of those supporting the Sainsbury option, and were those actions justified. Examples include:
 - a. Should both sites have been reconsidered at the second meeting, or just the Tesco application for which the decision had been wrongly overturned?
 - b. Should the S106 agreement have taken so long to negotiate and agree?
 - c. Were some of the legal disputes dragged out unnecessarily because of an overcautious approach from Fenland District Council?
 - d. Why was the early decision made to hold the second planning meeting at Wisbech St Mary? Whilst this decision was overturned, it is indicative of the uphill battle that some supporters of the Sainsbury application feel they faced.
 - e. Were officers unresponsive to requests for meetings from the Sainsbury team and did this slow down the process unnecessarily?

Whittlesey Town Council do not believe this list is exhaustive, but it does show that there are serious questions that need to be answered, firstly in order to ensure that lessons are learned for the future, but secondly to restore the trust that is necessary between Whittlesey residents and its council.

The Town Council believes there is a simple method for selecting a suitable individual to carry out this review, which is for the two councils to work with the Planning Advisory Service to find a person suitable to both parties.

The forthcoming Housing and Planning Bill offers an opportunity for councils, this is strengthened by the positive decisions Fenland District Council has taken to work closer with Peterborough City Council in carrying out its planning function. But, unless lessons are learned from the past, there will not be the necessary confidence in Fenland District Council in order for it to progress with any visionary approach to planning in Whittlesey and failing to learn the lessons of the past will also prevent it evolving into a service that matches its future vision. It is for these reasons that Whittlesey Town Council feels this must be a truly independent enquiry and that, by agreeing to such, Fenland District Council will not only be providing reassurance to the people of Whittlesey, but saving time and money in the future.

End

Cllr Boden suggested a page on the website, Cllr Mrs Laws advised they had a website meeting review on Tuesday and would discuss it at that meeting. Cllr Curtis to speak to the Cambs Times and Peterborough Today to request it is publicised in the papers.

- Kings Dyke – Cllr Curtis advised members that were some comments in Discovering Whittlesey regarding the timescales for Kings Dyke crossing the timescales listed are incorrect. Discovering Whittlesey need to be advised of the following
 - Planning application to be heard in April 2016.
 - Construction to be started midway through 2017 subject to weather
 - Completion by mid 2017.
- Tesco Fund update – Cllr Dorling advised members that WTC had received £10K from Tesco for distribution within the community for local projects. This had proved to be very successful, we received a total of 34 applications, 9 of which didn't meeting the criteria, leaving a total of £16K that had been requested from these applicants. The Sub Committee was appointed by the F & P Committee to work through all the valid applications and allocate the funding, which took considerable time but had finally managed to allocate the funds across all the successful applications. Cllr Dorling requested that the FC allow the cheques to be despatched to enable them to be included in this year's figures. Cllr Mrs Mayor asked for the information to be publicised. Cllr Miscandlon thanked the Sub Committee and the Clerk. Cllr Bristow asked for any organisations that had not been known of before be given to enable him to promote Glassmore Bank and Burnthouse Farm. Cllr Dorling advised members that a letter

would be sent accompanying the cheque asking for feedback as to how the funds have assisted.

F33/16. Ward Matters

Cllr Curtis – Pavements on Crescent Road and Crescent Close.

Cllr Mason – Members were advised that the problem of the yellow spotting on vehicles in and around Snoots Road, Priors Road and Churchfield Way, this problem had been caused by Bee pollen, however the Bees have now been relocated to Parson Drove.

F34/16. Approval of Bank reconciliation and Council payments.

Members approved the Council payments and bank reconciliation.

Cllr Garratt left the meeting at 9.45.

F35/16. Exclusion of the Public, including the Press.

Resolved that in respect of the following item of business, the public, including the press, will be excluded from the meeting, because of the confidential nature of the business to be discussed, publication of which would be prejudicial to the public interest.

F36/16. To discuss those items previously agreed at agenda item F21/16

- Town Council Tenants
- The confidential minute was approved
- Whittlesey Town Council – Grosvenor House.

F37/16. Date of next full Council meeting – Wednesday 9th March 2016 at 7.30 at Grosvenor House.

Meeting Closed at 10.00



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Cllr Alex Miscandlon
Mayor of Whittlesey