

WHITTLESEY TOWN COUNCIL

**Minutes of the Meeting held on Thursday 20th October 2022 at 7.30pm at Peel House,
8 Queen Street, Whittlesey, PE7 1AY**

Present: Cllr Mason, Dorling, Mrs Mayor, Wicks, Gerstner, Nawaz Mrs Windle, Whitwell, Boden, Munns

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

Recording: The recording is made as an aide memoir for the Clerk

F119/22 To receive apologies from absent members and the reason for the apology.

Cllr Mrs Laws & Miscandlon (personal), Mockett (work), No apologies were received from Cllr Davies

F120/22. To receive members' declarations of disclosable pecuniary, non-disclosable pecuniary or non-pecuniary interests in relation to any agenda item

Cllr Mrs Mayor as a member of FDC Panning may make comment but will reserve the right to change her mind should more information become available

F121/22 - Street Scene Officer Report & CCTV report.

Members received the Street Scene & CCTV report.

F122/22 Police Report

Members received the Police report

F123/22. To confirm and sign the Minutes from the Full Council Meeting held on Thursday 18th August 2022

Ratified: The Minutes from the meeting were approved and signed as a true record

F124/22 Public Forum

To allow any member of the public to address the council. Time allowed 15 minutes in total to be split equally between the total amount wishing to speak.

There were 10 members of the public present:

Mrs C Terrey – Whittlesey Society – Heritage Walk pleased to be invited to the launch and receive the heritage brochure, however there are sixty-six errors in the brochure, she will send them to the Clerk.

Natalie Mason – representative of Whittlesey athletic and involved with youth welfare, raised concerns about the discussions for the allocation of the heritage funds, questioning why 45K was to be spend lighting, and fencing around the tennis courts at the manor and asked who would maintain this, she also questioned the existing surface which is dangerous. The same questions were asked about the potential 30K which could be spend on the cricket facilities. She asked who will benefit if 110,000 is spend on solar panels for the Manor (will it just be Freedom Leisure), and lastly the proposed 145K on the community five a side pitch. She suggested that funding should be allocated to an area that provide a multi-use games area.

Kevin Blenco – Secretary of Whittlesey Junior FC, concerns about money going into one area, e.g., the Manor, which is in a state of disrepair. The infrastructure in and around the manor is not suitable. Should there not be wider consultation between all the sports clubs to obtain their thoughts on how the funding should allocated.

Robert Windle – Friends of the Manor Group – The last meeting had been very positive, he is aware there is no guarantee for the funding, however there is a wish list should the funding be available, Mr Windle advised the Manor is a central point in the town. The idea of the friends of the Manor is to build relationships and discuss issues and move forward with WTC and Freedom leisure. If funding was available, this funding should be able to capture other funding by match funding. The next meeting is Tuesday 8th November at the Manor 7pm start.

Mr Windle also asked if the F & P committee could consider allowing anyone applying for funding be able to present their case in person if they wish to.

F125/22 Agenda items for Discussion.

1. Heritage Centre – update - Cllr Mason read out the following statement.

1 Background

As part of the Growing Fenland work for the town of Whittlesey, the town team requested £500,000 to develop a heritage centre for the town. This facility was to be situated on Forterra land, adjacent to a local nature reserve about $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile outside the town. Substantial work has been undertaken by third party consultants prior to the Growing Fenland project regarding this project.

2 Project progress

Following the CPCA's approval of the grant to Whittlesey Town Council to support the development of the Heritage Centre, the Town Council put together a project working group consisting of three elected Members. Work on the design of the facility has been underway since 2021 until March 2022. Whilst a design now exists, there is a substantial gap in funding between the expected cost of the new building and the funding available. Other funders have been considered with no success – the funding gap is too large and requires a national funder such as the Heritage Lottery Fund.

With the current climate in the construction market, alongside the abnormal inflation seen in the UK, any build project would need to add in a substantial inflationary contingency, as well as contingencies for unforeseen issues encountered during the build. These considerations increase the funding gap further.

The project team has considered the location and the gap in funding, alongside market conditions and believe that continuing with the project at this time is unlikely to produce a facility in a timely, affordable manner.

The project will not give good value for money to the taxpayer and work on the heritage centre has been suspended since early summer 2022.

3 Alternative Propositions

3.1 Await further gap funding

Given the current estimated cost of the facility now exceed £1m, it is considered that the facility will not represent good value to the taxpayer. Additional supportive gap funding will not change the poor value for money that the project would represent in the current construction climate and this option has been discounted.

3.2 Relocation and reduce facility scope

Consideration has been given to relocating the heritage centre to a more central position within the town and reducing the scope of the design. Whilst this is possible, the facility that would be developed as a result is unlikely to be able to provide the facilities necessary in an effective heritage centre and would not meet community or visitor expectations.

The project group has discounted this option.

3.3 Focus the remaining Growing Fenland funding on improving community provision within Whittlesey

As the Heritage Centre either in its original form and location, or in a reduced form and different location has now been halted, local elected Members have discussed other options for the remaining funding to improve community assets within Whittlesey. Members are determined to retain the grant funding to improve the town for local residents.

Members' focus has been drawn to the very popular community green space that is central within the town – the Manor Field and Leisure Centre - and the community assets in this location.

Members have highlighted several aspects of the community facilities that require capital investment as follows.

- a) Community basketball / tennis / netball facilities; lighting upgrade and secure fencing
- b) Energy efficiency improvements added to the existing solar provision on the swimming pool building
- c) Community 5-a-side synthetic pitch; fencing and carpet replacement

In addition, on the same site, the following additional community provision should be developed.

d) Together with the County Council youth and community team, provide a youth facility attached to the Manor Leisure Centre using a Youth Investment Fund (YIF) grant and some of the remaining CPCA Growing Fenland grant. Should any YIF bid be unsuccessful or fall out of the anticipated timeframe, the project team proposes that the £125,000 set aside for YIF match funding be recirculated into further, Member-led, enhancements of community facilities on the Manor Field site.

e) Development of cricket facilities at the Manor open space, including practice nets and improvements to the existing football pavilion for it to be used for cricket.

4 Delivery timeframe

These projects, except for the shared YIF funded youth facility, are deliverable in the short term (during 2022/23). The expectation is that the youth facility, if successful with a YIF grant, would be deliverable in 2023/24.

5 Anticipated costs

Costs estimated for the improvements specified are as follows:

- £45,000 Community basketball / tennis / netball
- £110,000 Additional solar PV on swimming pool building
- £145,000 5-a-side pitch refurbishment
- £125,000 Match funding for YIF bid for youth facilities
- £30,000 Cricket facility development
- £455,000 Total

6 Summary

Members have been very committed to delivery of the Heritage Centre in Whittlesey. Unfortunately, the development of a facility to match local ambition has proved far more costly than originally envisaged due to a changing construction market and abnormal inflation levels.

To ensure that Whittlesey retains the Growing Fenland grant, Members have halted the Heritage Centre project and have proposed a suite of alternative capital works to improve and develop the facilities of its town to tackle the highly publicised issues of physical inactivity, obesity, and anti-social behaviour.

These works are deliverable within the CPCA's timescale of commencement by March 2023 except for the youth facility.

However, on Monday 17 October 2022 a private meeting was held between Cllrs Boden and Mrs Laws, Stephen Hodson and Martin Curtis, members of the Growing Fenland Committee at which it was determined that a request would be made to the CPCA Main Board meeting on Wednesday 19 October to withdraw the agenda item requesting the return of funding of £455,000. This was duly proposed by Cllr Boden at the CPCA and unanimously carried.

It is the opinion of the elected members of the Property Working Group of Whittlesey Town Council that this action was taken without due authority and has jeopardised the transfer of funding to a project that would have been of value to the community of Whittlesey.

Below is the statement from Cllr Boden following by Cllr Comments.

CB – Advised the money originated from CPCA, deadline for spending late 2021. A particular method of governance was set up which each market town had to follow, the CPCA continue to have full control over the spending. CPCA set up a working group which was to represent interests of that town and report back to the CPCA.

Councillors were a minority of the group and represented Whittlesey Town Council as follows Cllr Boden – County Councillor Cllr Mrs Laws District Councillor and Cllr Munns Town Councillor plus five other members of the committee.

The strongest opinion from WTC was for a heritage centre, located close to must farm. The figure requested from the CPCA 500k, indicative costs were given to the property working group of around 300k. When the actual costings were given, they were significantly more, six months additional time was given to obtain the additional funds 300K that were required for the project, eventually it was clear that the funding at this time was not achievable, therefore WTC were unable to proceed with that build.

The CPCA realised that they have quite a tight financial position now and if WTC did not move quickly to repurpose what was left from the heritage centre funding, there was concern it would be lost, the CPCA have given 3 extensions to the spending of these funds. No schemes would be agreed if the work had not commenced by 31st March 2022. The Authorised group 'Growing Fenland Group 'must' be the one to make the decision. The last meeting was Monday 17th October, Cllr Munns was unable to attend, most of the group were not in favour of the funds going to the Manor Leisure centre. To prevent losing the 455K, Cllr Boden requested Phil Hughes contact the CPCA to gain agreement that the funding would be available if a different scheme could be agreed. New proposals need to be drawn up to be discussed by CPCA on the 30th of November 2022.

The working group held a second meeting on 19th October at 5pm, at this meeting an alternative has been recommended to the CPCA for consideration. The provisional recommendations are additional solar panels on the Manor, the tennis / netball lighting and security). The solar panels have been recommended due to the rising costs and there are municipal swimming pools being closed due to costs. The department for leisure culture and sport have put out a statement advising they are working actively to support municipal swimming pools. The contractual arrangement between FDC and freedom, means Freedom cannot just walk away, if they did, they would face huge penalties. The panels would remain the property of FDC as would any responsibility for the maintenance

The other items for the CPCA to consider would be:

1. outline business case for the southern relief road if this could be counted as capital expenditure funding could be allocated from the 250K.
2. A display of artifacts from Must Farm in the library 50K
- 3 The Buttercross to be relevelled to ensure safety for all future events.
4. Lighting for the tennis courts approximately 45k.



5. Solar panels for the Manor Leisure Centre 110K.

The numbers are flexible as there is no confirmed costings.

- Cllr Mrs Windle asked why Cllr Gerstner was not allowed as an observer to attend the 'Growing Fenland Group'. Cllr Boden advised this is not a public or council meeting, it has been set up as a specific composition and they do not have to report to WTC.
- Cllr Munns advised members he was not present at either of last 2 'Growing Fenland' meetings. Cllr Boden advised he had updated Cllr Munns after the meeting. Cllr Munns confirmed if he had any queries, he would ask questions of the Group.

Cllr Dorling – The addition 110k for solar panels on the wet side of the manor would mean £236,700 invested in the centre, there are already 100 panels on roof generating 30kw, additionally there has been some boiler work completed which has reduced the heating costs. Another 100 would produce 40kw of energy, there is no detail about batteries to save the energy generated through the year in batteries, for later use. Cllr Boden advised he is no expert on solar panels and Phil Hughes from FDC has produced the numbers and has overall responsibility for the panels.

- Cllr Gerstner – Given the current state of the CPCA, and with substantial amount of funding be allocated to the relief road there is no guarantee spending funds on the business case if we don't reach another stage at the CPCA. Cllr Boden advised there is a seven-stage process for major infrastructure, and we are at stage one, the inception report that WTC paid for was stage zero, that was a revenue item and did not qualify for capital funding. Stage 1 strategic would attract capital funding and stage 2 could attract other sources of funding.
- Cllr Wicks – Expressed concern that a communication recently advised that all swimming pools in fenland could be under threat of closure, given the fact we are surrounded by water, it is imperative that children have the opportunity to learn how to swim.
- Cllr Munns is there any contractual obligation with freedom to ensure they maintain certain items to a standard. Cllr Boden explained they do have responsibility for maintenance internally, but is unsure of the external provision, i.e., pitches etc, should Freedom wish to discontinue with any of the internal items, they must obtain permission from FDC.

2. Continental Market update

Cllr Nawaz advised members several onsite meetings had been held with draft plans, however there were some issues highlighted, the new location was the Grosvenor Road North car park with a meeting set for 7th October, however on 5th October the MD and a representative from the Continental Market team visited the site and agreed it was not feasible, on that basis they have declined to hold the market.

3. Bus Services Route 31 & 33

Cllr Boden advised the CCC have very limited funds to support the bus services. Stagecoach did approach the CPCA suggesting they may have to withdraw from 18 routes and reduce 22 others. Whittlesey would lose 30 min service; it would be every 60 mins the service the avenues would be reduced by two thirds. This would come into effect from 30th October 2022. Whittlesey would lose all Sunday busses, and one bus an hour going to and from Peterborough, the early and late busses would cease. This is being reviewed in five months' time. Cllr Boden advised that the decision children living in Eastrea / Coates will be advised that despite having a statutory right, they will no longer be able to utilise the service that are paid for by CCC, this is a county wide policy. Cllr Boden does not agree with this and is chasing a suitable resolution.

4. Queen Street Doctors Surgery

Cllr Gerstner advised members that following his letter to the surgeries, he has received a presentation however it is not in the public domain so he can only advise of certain items. New Queen

Street Surgery in 2015 had 16,000 patients, now they have 20,000 also there were seven partner doctors and four salaried doctors, there are now six partners and one paid GP. This has resulted in the loss of 473 face to face appointments. They know the CQC rating is poor and the interaction with patients is poor. They are struggling with recruitment; poor patient satisfaction ratings and current GPs are stretched to burnout. The call centre receive abuse from 8am to 4pm, doctors are receiving the same. Queen Street employ local doctors and can't attract more doctors due to the abuse they receive.

5. Heritage Walk

Cllr Mason advised he had been privileged to be part of the opening ceremony.

6. Coates War Memorial update

Cllr Mrs Laws was not present at the meeting but had sent in the following report: Currently in e-mail conversation with Historic England, War Memorial Trust & List Buildings Historic Environment Team. The team only work part time, so the process is slow.

The documentation required to register Coates War Memorial as a listed building has been supplied by Mr Barrett via the Proprietor of The Vine Public House, whose deceased husband Mr Stuart Cross had been a volunteer caring for the memorial along with a team of volunteers including Mr Rogers who has applied to the War Memorial Trust to request a list of World War One Soldiers and their details who gave their lives to ensure their names are on Coates War Memorial. I have a copy of the Roll of Honour with detailed information relating to each inscribed name including the 2019 addition of George Warwick. The application has been submitted to ensure Coates War Memorial is protected and adopted by the War Memorial Trust, but this may take several weeks or even months.

7. Warm Hub

Cllr Gerstner asked Cllr Boden if Fenland District Council are making any provision for warm hubs and suggested the library as an option. Cllr Boden will chase this up.

F126/22. To receive Councillor & outside body reports.

Children's Centre update – Cllr Mrs Windle was not present at the meeting, so submitted the following report from her meeting with officers of Cambridgeshire County Council family and children's centres and their partners Barbados on Monday 15th August 2022

The meeting was organised by Rebecca Gray, from Cambridgeshire County Council and was an introductory meeting for Cllr Mrs Windle (WTC representative on the Scaldgate Child and Family Centre) to meet with key County Council organisers of the Child and Family centres and their new partners Barnardo's.

The forthcoming relaunch of the Child and Family Centres in March, Chatteris and Whittlesey in the Autumn of 2022 was discussed at length. This follows closure of the centres due to the Covid pandemic.

Cllr. Windle outlined her involvement as Secretary of WEFA (Whittlesey Emergency Food Aid) and the Food Banks's imminent move to new premises at the Manor Leisure Centre. Discussion took place about signposting of help to families who receive food aid, from County Council Officers to ensure that vulnerable families do not fall through the net and are claiming everything they are entitled to. This possibly to take place once move to new premises had taken place.

After the introductory/explanatory meeting Cllr Windle was approached to a board member of the South Fenland Advisory Group of Child and Family Centres and had accepted.

Cllr Windle also attended the Barnardo's Garden Party at the Manor Leisure Centre in July.

F127/22. To report the minutes from the Finance & Policy Meeting on Wednesday 21st September & the draft minutes from Monday 17th October 2022

Ratified: The minutes of the meeting held on the 21st of September were approved and signed as a true record, and the minutes from the 17th of October 2022 were reported.

F128/22 To report the financial documents.

- To report the bank reconciliation to 31st August 2022 and 30th September 2022 – Members received the bank reconciliation
- To report the list of payments & uncashed payments. The payment list for vouchers 148 to 179 to the value of £13782.54 were proposed by Cllr Boden, seconded Cllr Gerstner with a unanimous vote in favour.
- To report the year-to-date figures (2022) – Members received the year-to-date figures

To ratify the lease on the new copier

Photocopier upgrade – The Clerk advised members the existing copier has never been as good as the previous one, the current supplier has offered a new machine but on a better deal than the existing copier with better reproduction. The existing cost is 782.18 per quarter, the new cost is £683.50 per quarter, this includes all consumables, also the cost per copy if we go over the agreed amount for both colour and mono is less. Members were furnished with all the figures for discussion, Cllr Davies proposed we proceed with this, seconded by Cllr Miscandlon with a unanimous vote in favour. (F & P Minutes). Cllr Boden proposed the new lease, seconded Cllr Mrs Mayor with a unanimous vote in favour.

To ratify the donation requests from CAMSAR & Whittlesey Extravaganza

In 2021 the Extravaganza were given 5K, this year they only asked for 3k, the F &P committee only offered 1500.00, Cllr Mason asked for their costs, an example being an increase in road closure costs of 50%, Cllr Mason proposed 3K, but Cllr Boden advised there was not enough in the GPC budget, however funds could be moved from other budget headings. Cllr Mrs Windle suggested moving forward that anyone submitting a grant application be invited to present their case. Cllr Mason proposed 3K, the voting was 3 in favour, 4 against, 3 abstentions, this proposal was defeated, therefore the amount of 1500.00 was proposed by Cllr Boden, seconded Cllr Gerstner with a unanimous vote in favour.

CAMSAR – 500.00 was proposed by Cllr Boden, seconded by Cllr Wick, there was a majority vote with one abstention.

Cllr Boden suggesting an extraordinary meeting be convened to discuss the heating and hot water issues due to commercial sensitivity of the tenders, the public will be excluded. Heating and hot water – extraordinary meeting Wednesday 26th at 5pm. Public excluded. Section 12a 1972.

F129/22. To report the draft minutes from the Planning meeting Wednesday 7th September and receive the minutes from Wednesday 5th October 2022

Ratified: The minutes from the meeting on 7th September were approved and signed as a true record, the minutes from the meeting on 5th October were reported

F130/22. To report the draft minutes from the Community Projects meeting on Wednesday 7th September 2022.

The draft minutes were reported, Cllr Mrs Mayor asked when the next inspection as the last one was July.

F131/22. Consultations

There were no consultations

F132/22 Information Only.



1. WEFA update – DM expressed his thanks to Roxy at the Lincolnshire Coop who are providing the moving facilities for WEFA.
2. Remembrance Parade – Cllr Mason advised members of the new start location for the Remembrance Parade which is Parkinsons Lane and then after the church service refreshments for all involved in the parade will be at Childers.
3. LHI – Members were asked to note the new application process

F133/22 Invitations.

1. Mayors Civic Service 30th October 2022.

F134/22. Date of next meeting – Wednesday 23rd November 2022

Apologies from Cllr Boden, & Cllr Gerstner for the November meeting

Meeting closed 9.45



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Cllr David Mason
Mayor of Whittlesey

Whittlesey Town Council PAYMENTS LIST

Voucher Code	Date	Minuta	Bank	Cheque No	Description	Supplier	VAT Type	Net	VAT	Total
180	31/10/2022		Barclays Current Acco	Online	Donation	Whittlesey Extravaganza	E	1,500.00		1,500.00
181	31/10/2022	FC 20/10/22	Barclays Current Acco	Online	Donation	Cam Sight	E	500.00		500.00
182	31/10/2022		Barclays Current Acco	Online	Expenses	S Piergianni	E	14.39		14.39
183	31/10/2022		Barclays Current Acco	Online	Stationery	Peterborough Office Supplies	S	41.69	8.34	50.03
184	31/10/2022		Barclays Current Acco	Online	Grass Cutting	RJ Warren	S	1,728.00	345.60	2,073.60
185	31/10/2022		Barclays Current Acco	Online	Subscription	Ray Evans Writer	Z	17.99		17.99
186	31/10/2022		Barclays Current Acco	Online	Trade Recycling	Fenland District Council	E	132.77		132.77
187	31/10/2022		Barclays Current Acco	Online	Mileage	Dave Mason	E	80.55		80.55
188	31/10/2022		Barclays Current Acco	Online	Telephone & Internet	Ethos	E	78.31		78.31
189	31/10/2022		Barclays Current Acco	Online	Salary	S Piergianni	E	1,765.66		1,765.66
190	31/10/2022		Barclays Current Acco	Online	Photocopies	Ethos	S	111.15	22.23	133.38
191	31/10/2022		Barclays Current Acco	Online	Subscription	NSALG	S	55.00	11.00	66.00
192	10/10/2022		Barclays Current Acco	Online	SLA	SG Computing	E	140.00		140.00
193	10/10/2022		Barclays Current Acco	Online	Window Cleaning	H20 Pure Cleaning	E	10.00		10.00
194	10/10/2022		Barclays Current Acco	Online	Tax & NI	HMRC	E	673.52		673.52
195	10/10/2022		Barclays Current Acco	Online	Mayors Allowance	Dave Mason	E	450.00		450.00
196	10/10/2022		Barclays Current Acco	Online	Salary	Clare Lynch	E	170.00		170.00
197	31/10/2022		Barclays Current Acco	Online	Office Electric	Opus Energy	L	169.10	8.46	177.56
198	31/10/2022		Barclays Current Acco	Online	Bank Charges / Interest	Barclays	E	14.83		14.83
199	31/10/2022		Barclays Current Acco	Online	Consumable	Peterborough Office Supplies	S	42.34	3.40	45.74
200	31/10/2022		Barclays Current Acco	Online	PAT Testing	Fenland Electrical	S	378.00	75.60	453.60
201	31/10/2022		Barclays Current Acco	Online	MVAS Maintenance	Fenland Electrical	S	720.00	144.00	864.00
202	31/10/2022		Barclays Current Acco	Online	Flat maintenance	Fenland Electrical	S	120.00	24.00	144.00
203	10/10/2022		Barclays Current Acco	Online	MVAS Maintenance	Fenland Electrical	S	330.00	66.00	396.00
204	10/10/2022		Barclays Current Acco	Online	Timers	Fenland Electrical	S	200.00	40.00	240.00
205	10/10/2022		Barclays Current Acco	Online	Bunting Removal	Fenland Electrical	S	60.00	12.00	72.00
Total								9,503.30	760.63	10,263.93

Whittlesey Town Council RECEIPTS LIST

Voucher Code	Date	Minute	Bank	Receipt No	Description	Supplier	VAT Type	Net	VAT	Total
73 Commercial Rent	10/10/2022		Barclays Current Acco	Online	ISA-CAM Rent	ISA-Cam Rent	E	300.00		300.00
74 Commercial Rent	10/10/2022	Late Sept Rent	Barclays Current Acco	Online	Fenland Youth Radio	Fenland Youth Radio	E	300.00		300.00
75 Commercial Rent	10/10/2022		Barclays Current Acco	Online	Fenland Youth Radio	Fenland Youth Radio	E	300.00		300.00
76 Bank Charges & Interest	10/10/2022		Barclays Current Acco	Online	Bank Charges / Interest	Barclays	E	1.27		1.27
77 Bank Charges & Interest	03/10/2022		Barclays Reserve Acco		Bank Charges / Interest	Barclays	E	0.50		0.50
Total								901.77		901.77