

WHITTLESEY TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 22nd June 2023 at 7.30pm at Peel House, 8 Queen Street, Whittlesey, PE7 1AY.

Present: Cllr Laws, Gerstner, Black, Boden, Dickinson, Dorling, Sennitt-Clough, Mockett, Nawaz, Wainwright, Whitwell, Wicks, Armann

Officer in attendance Mrs Sue Piergianni – Town Clerk & RFO

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

F93/2023 To receive apologies from absent members and the reason for the apology.

Cllr Mrs Mayor (personal)

F94/2023. To receive members' declarations of disclosable pecuniary, non-disclosable pecuniary or non-pecuniary interests in relation to any agenda items discussed later in the agenda.

Cllr Gerstner advised he sits on Whittlesey Festival and Whittlesey Extravaganza Committee.

Cllr Mrs Laws – Portfolio holder for FDC Planning and will only advise on planning policy issues should any arise.

F95/2023 – To elect a Leader and Deputy Leader of the council for the term until May 2024

Cllr Ray Whitwell was proposed by Cllr Sennitt-Clough, seconded by Cllr Arman, there were no other nominations, this proposal was carried unanimously.

Cllr Chris Boden was proposed by Cllr Sennitt-Clough, seconded by Cllr Arman, there were no other nominations, this proposal was carried unanimously.

F96/2023. Street Scene Officer Report & CCTV report.

The reports were received.

F97/2023. Police Report

The Clerk advised a letter had been sent by the previous Mayor to Sgt Arnold regarding additional patrols. Cllr Boden advised there is a committee that would deal with additional funding for PCSO's. There is a police liaison group at FDC who have two representatives.

F98/2023. To confirm and sign the Minutes from the Annual Council Meeting held on Thursday 18th May 2023

Ratified: The minutes were approved and signed a true record with one amendment. (F75/2023, change precept to concept).

F99/23. To appoint members to Outside Bodies.

Cllr Whitwell made the following proposals.

CCTV – Cllr Mockett, Substitute Cllr Mrs Mayor
Glassmore Bank – Cllrs Sennitt- Clough, Dickinson & Nawaz
Burnthouse Farm – Cllrs Sennitt-Clough, Mockett, Nawaz
WEFA – No representative required.
Fletton Liaison Group – Cllr Laws, Black, Whitwell & Nawaz

Community Car Scheme - No representative required.
Rural CAB – Cllrs Sennitt-Clough, Substitute Cllr Nawaz
Community Rail Partnership – Cllr Mayor
Whittlesey Station Project – Cllrs Dickinson, Black & Nawaz
Whittlesey in Bloom – Cllrs Mayor & Arman
Mud Walls – Group ceased; no representation required.
Whittlesey Christmas Extravaganza – Cllr Nawaz
Whittlesey Christmas Lights – Cllr Mayor, Substitute Cllr Whitwell
Whittlesey Festival – Cllr Sennitt-Clough & Nawaz
The Allotment Society – Cllr Mockett, Whitwell & Arman
Growing Fenland – Cllr Dickinson

Cllr Wicks advised there has been no discussion with any of the independent councillors of what their wishes were and finds it disappointing. Cllr Mrs Laws asked if he had suggested any outside bodies he wished to be considered for, he advised these had been sent in. Cllr Wainwright agreed with Cllr Wicks on the lack of independent councillors who were represented on the list. Cllr Boden identified that not all outside body positions have been filled and this item is open for any proposals.

Cllr Wicks requested he be on Glassmore, Burnthouse, Fletton Liaison and rail partnership. Cllr Boden suggested we reconsider the list item by item to ensure all requests are considered. Cllr Gerstner also expressed his disappointment as he has been on the CAB for many years and has extensive knowledge of this organisation.

Revised proposals

CCTV – Cllr Mockett, Substitute Cllr Mrs Mayor

Glassmore Bank – Nominations were Cllrs Sennitt- Clough, Dickinson, Nawaz & Wicks, members voted majority in favour for Cllrs Sennitt-Clough, Dickinson, Nawaz.

Burnthouse Farm – Nominations were Cllrs Sennitt-Clough, Mockett, Nawaz, members voted majority in favour the councillors listed. Cllr Wainwright offered to be on Burnthouse Farm with a unanimous vote in favour.

WEFA – No representative required.

Fletton Liaison Group – Nominations were Cllr Laws, Black, Whitwell, Nawaz & Wicks. Members voted unanimously for all nominations (Cllr Mrs Laws will contact the company to see how many representatives are required on this group),

Community Car Scheme - No representative required.

Rural CAB – Nominations were Cllrs Sennitt-Clough, Cllr Nawaz, Gerstner & Wainwright. Cllr Gerstner advised as a member of the CAB he will remain part of it whether put on the group or not. Members voted as follows for the representative, Cllr Sennitt- Clough (8), Gerstner (4), Wainwright (8). This was a split vote, so Cllr Laws as the Chair had the casting vote and selected Cllr Sennitt-Clough. Nominations and votes for the substitute were as follows. Cllr Nawaz (8) Cllr Gerstner (4), Wainwright (4), therefore Cllr Nawaz was the substitute.

Community Rail Partnership – Nominations were Cllr Mayor & Wicks. WTC can have more than one Cllr on this group; therefore, both were agreed unanimously.

Whittlesey Station Project – Cllrs Dickinson, Black & Nawaz – Unanimous vote in favour.

Whittlesey in Bloom – Cllr Mayor & Arman - Unanimous vote in favour

Whittlesey Christmas Extravaganza – Cllr Nawaz - Unanimous vote in favour.

Whittlesey Christmas Lights – Cllr Mayor, Substitute Cllr Whitwell - Unanimous vote in favour
Whittlesey Festival – Cllr Sennitt-Clough & Nawaz - Unanimous vote in favour

The Allotment Society – Cllr Mockett, Whitwell & Arman - Unanimous vote in favour

Growing Fenland – Cllr Dickinson - Unanimous vote in favour

F100/2023 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.

Eleven members of the public were present.

Alan Bessant – Fletton Liaison committee, they have a highly successful liaison group working with Johnsons, they would be keen to have a representative on the Fletton Group.

Julie Windle – Whittlesey Post Office – staffing issues. We are a growing town and, in a period, when banks are closing and business through the post office has increased. For 90% of the time at Whittlesey only one counter service is open with large queues on most days.

Robert Windle – Suggested a better system of voting should have been adopted for outside bodies. He expressed his thanks to everyone involved with Platinum Wood. Congratulate Coates Fete on the Green, he also thanked Cllrs for supporting the Big Bash. Mr Windle launched the new Whittlesey Sports and Community Guide; this is available in hard copy and internet.

F101/2023 Agenda items for Discussion.

1. Community-led promotion of safety awareness campaigns and school travel plans

Cllr Sennitt-Clough circulated to all Cllrs a document which includes her observations outside the four Whittlesey Schools during drop off and pick up times. Cllr Wicks gave similar observations about the primary school in Cotes.

As a newly elected District and Town Councillor, she is aware that longstanding councillors whose wards the Whittlesey schools fall within have worked hard over the years to promote safety around schools. Her objective is, therefore, an assessment of the most current situation to present firstly to Cllrs and subsequently depending on the ensuing discussion, to schools and the community. She will not be reading from the document that was circulated, due to its length but it is there for reference.

Her focus here is on community-led strategies, not top-down, technocratic approaches (such as ANPR cameras), in order to improve school safety at drop-off and pick-up times. A community-led approach does, in fact, reflect the objective contained within the Strategic Framework for Road Safety from the Department for Transport.

A concern that is not mentioned in the pdfs she handed out are the obligations on parents of children with additional needs, such as those with a statement of special educational needs, children with disabilities or behavioural disorders. The first point to make is that if these children are entitled to free transport and are in mainstream education at the schools in Whittlesey, some of them may arrive by taxi. The other point to make is that if these children are ineligible for free transport, their parents and caregivers will, in some cases, need to drop them as close as possible to the school.

As school safety is an issue that potentially needs to be flagged every so often with schools and the community, what she proposes is that she write to the schools and request that they revisit their drop off and pick up strategies with all of what she has discussed in mind; that is: the safety

of children and pedestrians, reduced congestion and idling fumes, and where possible alternatives to driving and parking immediately outside of the schools.

Members were advised the Cambs Mayor is trying to push through a bus network reform by the back end of the year, previously a process like this took 3 years. Cllr Boden there is a half empty bus travelling from Turves to SHS, but the children in Coates are unable to get on this and pay. There is also the issue of students who go to PRC and those who have part time jobs and have to rely on parents to collect them due to the lack of buses.

2. Whittlesey Town Council Website.

Cllr Mrs Laws advised the website is over 8 years old and needs refreshing. It has been a challenge since the elections to update it following the boundary changes. She now has a working group to assist with this, Cllr Arman, and Dickinson.

3. Whittlesey Bus Service

Cllr Wicks – Certain parts of Whittlesey do not have a bus service at all. Could the X1 stop in Whittlesey and the villages as we now have the bridge which would mean far less delays without the level crossing. Cllr Boden advised a number of reviews are taking place, as far as the bus network is concerned. The bus network review commences early July 2023. There are two strands an open and official strand, and a second strand which is not being publicised, 'What can we do outside of the route network,' he is returning the Sunday service and trying to get buses every half hour. He is also trying to get the X1 to come through Whittlesey in the evening and on a Sunday.

4. Sir Harry Smith Community College

Cllr Wicks – Members asked the Clerk to contact SHS and invite the Principal Dawn White to come and update Councillors on how SHS are going to manage the increased PAN, additional traffic, and the increase in ASB in and out of the school.

5 & 6. New Queen Street Surgery & Doctor provision

Cllr Gerstner quoted a report he had received from the chair of PPG (Alison Bacon) who had met with the Practice Manager Diane Goss and Dr Garratt to discuss the periodic withdrawal of Doctrine and the inability of patients to get appointments. The Chair now feels more informed of the difficulties that the surgery faces, which include staffing. With reflect from 19h June the Doctrine website will be open between 9 – 12. Residents may not realise that Doctors do not only just see patients, but also have copious amounts of paperwork to deal with, the practice are concerned about the increase in properties and subsequently patients. They did comment that they are not consulted on any planning applications. Cllr Laws advised that doctors are one of the statutory consultees, it does go to the main commissioning board who should forward this to the local practice for comment. Cllr Boden advised Queen Street is part of a group of practices and geographically we are at the end of the group, and we have lost out as we are the eastern most surgery. We in Cambridgeshire cannot use our statutory powers of scrutiny to do anything about this as it is counted as being a Peterborough surgery as we are a branch of Stanground. Cllr Boden suggested that outside of the meeting councillors could send him issues for forwarding to Paul Medd for discussion at the ICB North Group.

7 & 8. Recycling & Food Waste.

The largest dumping site for plastics is not landfill, it is the Pacific Ocean.

Consider the environment, the implications of global warming and why Fenland needs to lead the way in reducing carbon emissions, concluding in a call to action.

Recycling and Food Waste - Reduce Reuse Recycle

Reduce:

Buy what you need and use what you buy, reduce packaging by buying loose, sign up for paperless billing and stop printing off emails, Try home composting food waste.

Food Waste:

We could have a community fridge. It supports the local food bank and makes better use of food nearing the best-by date.

Helping Whittlesey Group has over 2,500 members. They already have a committee, bank account and constitution. They are looking to put together a community Fridge to make better use of surplus food. They have furniture to distribute and need premises to store items, including bulk fresh food and a high street location to work from.

There are examples of people who have used the existing food bank for a long time but have not engaged with the CAB and certain benefits have not been captured. FDC and other professionals would take a more proactive route to help those most in need.

Re-Use:

There are 2,500 Repair Cafes in the UK 30 in Cambridgeshire. (Repair Workshop on BBC1).

Repair Cafes aim to:

Return repairing to local society in a modern way, maintain expertise and spread knowledge, promote social cohesion and a sense of community, Save money.

There is an appetite for having one in Whittlesey – It requires organisation, premises, and expertise in the same way that similar projects have developed in many villages and towns across the county.

Recycle

FDC Blue wheelie bins take:

Plastic bottles & containers, Food and beverage cans, Paper, Cardboard, Glass bottles and containers

Example:

A Cadet sought funding for a Duke of Edinburgh project that would support the charity Helipads for Hospitals to help the Air Ambulance by increasing the number of Helipads around the UK. WTC made a grant towards a container in the Ivy Leaf car park. Which was well supported and embraced by Whittlesey Street Pride.

Last year we crushed and contributed 20,145 cans. By 19th June, 13,534 this year. So last year, Street Pride collected 94 kg of aluminium from litter. This year, we are aiming for 140kg. The red collection container has moved to the car park backing onto Syers Lane.

Conclusion:

Reduce Reuse Recycle

What should our call to action be? Create an environmentally based working group? Create an environmental awareness and facilitate local people willing to be involved in making Whittlesey and villages better places to live, work and raise families.

Cllr Boden impressed that Whittlesey has a great deal of volunteers who wish to help set a cafe up. They need to start small and build up. With regards to food waste, we have a terrible problem in Fenland millions of pounds have been offered by central government to deal with food waste FDC have had to turn it down as CCC who are responsible for the disposal of waste have a contract which does not facilitate separate food waste systems, and it would be too costly to change their process, therefore Fenland are missing out on huge amounts of capital funding. Cllr Dorling requested that the council allow him to volunteer to move the repair café forward. All members agreed.

F102/2023. To receive Councillor & outside body reports.

Cllr Dorling advised his report had been discussed under Agenda item F101/2023 - 7 & 8. Recycling & Food Waste.

F103/2023. To report the minutes from the Finance & Policy Meeting on Monday 19th June 2023 and approve any donation requests.

The minutes from Monday 19th June were reported.

The donation for the Christmas lights for £7500.00 was approved.

Cllr Boden proposed all this, seconded Cllr Dorling with a unanimous vote in favour.

F104/2023 To report the financial documents.

- To report the bank reconciliation to 31st May 2023 -
- To report the list of payments & uncashed payments. Vouchers 23 - 60 to the value of £30,830.39 were unanimously approved.
- To report the year-to-date figures (31st May 2023)

F105/2023. To receive the minutes from the Planning meeting on Wednesday 31st May 2023, 2023

Ratified: The minutes were received.

F106/2023. To report the minutes from the Community Projects meeting on Wednesday 31st May 2023

Ratified: The minutes were received.

F107/2023. Consultations

Huntingdonshire District Council Local Plan – Closing date 5th July 2023 – Cllr Boden will respond to this before the closing date.

F108/2023 Information only.

War Memorials Bulletin

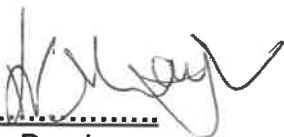
F109/2023 Invitations.

Mayor of Whittlesey Civic Service Sunday 1st October 2023

FDC Conduct Committee representative – Individuals were asked to respond directly to FDC if they wished to attend.

F110/2023. Date of next meeting –Thursday 20th July 2023

Meeting Closed: 22:00



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Cllr Dee Laws
Vice Chairman
Whittlesey Town Council