

WTC Meeting – Thursday 21st December

Disclaimer: These observations are not the 'official' minutes of the meeting, they are supplied by Whittlesey Town Council, normally (1) month following this meeting and can be viewed on their website. Decisions and Voting at this meeting may be ratified and confirmed at the following months meeting.

My thanks to Cllr Wainwright, who kindly took most of these notes.

May I wish everyone a Very Merry Christmas – A Healthy and Maybe Wealthy New Year.



Members of the Council present: **11**

Member of Public: **4**

AGENDA – Has previously been published.

F175/2023. Apologies for absence
Clls Sennitt Clough, Laws, and Turner,
Cllr Black arrived @ 19:00)
Cllr Mockett – No apologies.

F176/2023. To receive members' declarations of disclosable pecuniary. non-disclosable pecuniary or nonpecuniary interests in relation to any agenda item.
There were none.

F177/2023. Presentation from Matt Page on arrangements for Armed Forces Day 2024.
Deferred.

F178/2023. Street Scene Officer Report & CCTV report.
No comments.

F179/2023. Police Report
Confidential.

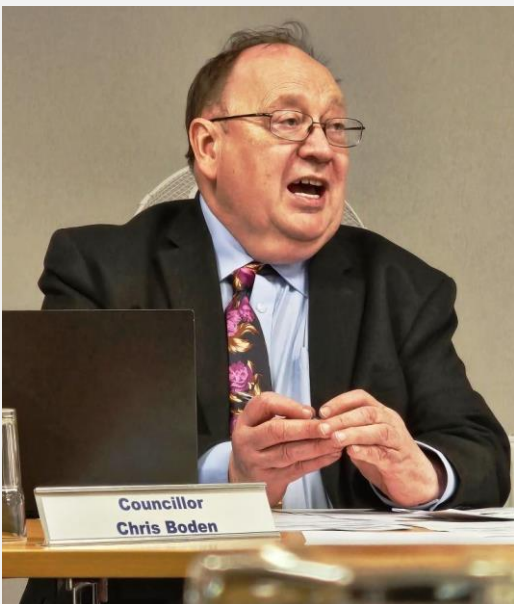
F180/2023. To confirm and sign the Minutes from the Full Council Meeting held on Thursday 23rd November 2023.
No comments.

F181/2023. Public Forum

Four members present – no speakers.



F182/2023 Agenda items for Discussion Budget — Cllr Boden.



Draft zero budget presented. At F&P (Finance & Policy) unanimous proposal monies received from insurance of Coates event be ringfenced for additional Coates music event.

F&P meeting in January to consider budget.

Cllr Gerstner (RG) The Government announced 6% uplift in budget for district councils. Will this affect FDC/WTC?

Cllr Boden (CB) Debatable whether there is additional money or not. Distribution is very complicated & uncertain (until mid-January). Minimum increase in base budget of 3%.

Fenland position unknown. Best Guess by FDC is increase of only about £600. Could change. No effect on town/parish councils.

Cllr Mayor (KM) Additional event in Coates – is that in addition to 3+1 already in the budget. We don't know because the chair keeps cancelling meetings.

CB: Money is in addition to that on the current budget.
Cllr Nawaz (HN) Needs clarification. Hold over to January F&P

Meeting Dates — Cllr Mayor (KM)

KM: Option 1: leave as is but change full council meetings to 6:30. Option 2: move subcommittees to Mondays.

CB: FDC may be moving the meetings to Monday. Should wait until FDC produce their calendar.

RG: SB cannot attend Monday meetings. Suggest leave as is but start full council at 6:30

CB: suggest only fix to AGM.

Unanimous agreement.

Weekly Market Town Heritage Talks (Cllr Sennitt-Clough), presented by Cllr Nawaz.



HN: New initiatives – FDC have set up new committee for culture & heritage.
Commencing Tuesday 9th, free to attend.
FACT Free transport.
To promote local historical awareness.

Funding from Arts Council England. Tickets from Ticketsource or FDC press release for link.

Fenland Poet Laureate Awards

(Cllr Sennitt-Clough), presented by Cllr Nawaz.
HN: two categories – 17 & under/over 17. Entrants may submit poem of approx. 40 lines in any form that references fenland.
Entrants must live/work/attend school in fenland.

FDC committee will submit a shortlist of entrants to Fenland poet laureate & ESC to judge. 1st/2nd/3rd awards & published anthology. Award 15/3/2023. Please publicise.

Review of HR Group – HN

HN: Mostly left for RG, mostly on his own. Need to reconstitute.
Propose SB, JM, ESC.

Majority.

Bus Service — Cllr Wicks (BW)

BW: Letter was presented to CB for forwarding to County Mayor on rural bus service. Update?

CB: Quite a few meetings. Nick Johnson email: deterioration is of concern. Part of national trend. Advice on gaps in Fenland is good. Sunday service: only 2 services, support needs addressing. Evening service Whittlesey to Peterborough – FDC to seek out new info. School services looking at how regular schools' services can be combined.

CB: Does not believe our basic service will be improved. An additional legal issue is that they do not have the right to subsidise a service that competes with existing services.



BW: villages to the east rely on buses from March, which are mostly empty. This affects viability. No bus to work, or to school.

CB: weekday frequency serving Eastrea & Coates not changed. Timing is important. School service in Eastrea Coates was raised. Turves bus “not allowed” to pick up in Coates/Eastrea. Finally, talks are being held. Hoping can be resolved. CPCA produced a paper to explain what they are doing. One example was a nurse in Eastrea could get to City Hospital.

BW: suggest that those making the decisions come to Whittlesey and view topography & problems.

CB: relying on info from stagecoach for passenger data. Unlikely to come & view for themselves. CPCA meeting in

January (31st) at Fenland Hall – public can ask questions.

HN: Has attended some meetings with Mayor. If the need can be demonstrated he will try to put something extra on the route.

CB: online survey on CPCA website on bus services.

Cllr Dickinson (DD) Important to offer service. 2 concerns: number of passengers. Transport is a factor in determining where to live.

BW: Every person in Whittlesey is within 15 minutes of a bus stop. No account taken of access for disabled.

Cllr Dorling (ED) Is it correct that retention/possession of a route is of value to a company? If it is underutilised it should be removed.

CB: Any bus company can operate on any service. Public bodies cannot run a service in competition with private companies. Mayor is proposing to change to a franchising system, where Mayor's office will decide on which buses run.

Road Safety – Cllr Wicks (BW)

BW: Speeding in the villages. Disappointing that Statistics demonstrate a problem in the villages. County officers report on planning app that fails to recognise the problem.

CB: prefer to say reports are not sufficiently competent. Many times, no response. Sometimes response is blatantly wrong. Frustrating. Don't know how it can be addressed. No political will. Not always the case. Service is patchy.

RG: WTC has invested in MPASS boxes to give hard evidence. Speeding into Coates is exceptional. CC Highways do not always fit for purpose. Not supporting FDC, WTC or public by looking at stats in detail. Need more pressure. Another option is to extend average speed cameras – expensive.

CB: Averaging camera procedure is opaque. Cameras on A605 appeared without consultation.

BW: it was an upgrade to the existing static cameras. Need to investigate what we can do to promote it.

RG: Body is Greater Cambs Safety Partnership.

Local Highways Improvements (LHI) - Closure date is 12th January 2024 - Cllr Boden

CB: Propose to submit the bollard application. Unanimous

F183/2023. To receive Councillor & outside body written reports.

None

F184/2023. To report the draft minutes from the Finance & Policy Meeting on Monday 16th December 2023

OK

Need to make sure the furniture in the chamber is legal & safe.

£130k for long-term deposit. Metrobank @5.88%. Needs to be £85k for FS cover. The rest needs to go elsewhere.

Clerk to be given the time to go in person. Unanimous.

F185/2023 To report the financial documents.

All looked at F&P. No outstanding questions

To report the bank reconciliations to 30th November 2023.

To report the list of payments & uncashed payments.

To report the year-to-date figures 30th November 2023

F186/2023. To report the draft minutes from the Planning meeting on Monday 16th December 2023 and receive the minutes from Wednesday 6th December 2023.

CB: All good.

F187/2023. Consultations

Proposed County Council new development survey at Bassenhally Farm — Cllr Laws
Email sent to clerk for survey – need our permission to use WTC logo. No new consultation yet.

BW: what is survey for?
Policy & Insight team.

HN: ask for more info.

KM: ask CB to speak to originator. Otherwise, we cannot support the survey without additional info.

F188/2023 Information only

Community Pantry updated information in pack.

F189/2023 Invitations.

None

F190/2023. Date of next meeting -18/01/2024 at 6:30.

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www.whittleseytowncouncil.gov.uk

Go to the top Tab Bar – Council Matters

Scroll down to Current Councillors or Find My Councillors.

Contact details are then shown for your Councillor in your area.

I am **Roy Gerstner** the **only** Councillor in Whittlesey who makes regular reports on Council, Public and Community Group meetings. I am aware that some Councillors post on Social Media.



I have done so for more than 13+ years both as a member of the public and as a Town Councillor.

I have made 7,500+ postings on this site.

I have been elected as the **Independent** Fenland District Councillor for The South Ward of Whittlesey along with Cllr Mrs Kay Mayor (Conservative)

I have been elected as an **Independent** Whittlesey Town Councillor for the South Ward of Whittlesey South along with Cllr Diana Dickinson (Conservative)



Primarily I report on Council meetings & business (Both at FDC & WTC) to keep the electorate informed on both what I am actively involved with and in part other interests that I believe the electorate within Whittlesey & District may also wish to be informed.

My Web-Blog is community based and I report and comment on many events, meetings and subjects.

I occasionally make a mistake and more than happy to correct if it pointed out to me.

If you have any issues or concerns outside of the Whittlesey South, you are welcome in the first instance to contact your own local Councillor.

If you contact me – I am more than happy to forward it to them. e&oe

©Roy Gerstner. If you have a generic issue or wish to make a comment, I am more than happy to publish or promote any community events – (subject to meeting publishing criteria).



FYI – The ‘Planters’ in/around Lovells Court/ Co-Op Car Park, where recently there was reported accidents at night.

Fenland District and Whittlesey Town Council are not responsible for this area.

Cllr Mayor reported the incident(s) to the Landowners agents, who in turn contacted the Landowner.

A reply was received within 4 days of the incident to inform that the ‘Planters’ will be removed and ‘Bollards’ put in place.

There will also be ‘Solar Powered’ motion controlled lighting in the area.

The work is planned for January.