

# WTC Meeting(s) Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> June 2024

**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.

9 members of the public were present.

9 members of the Council were present – apologies received from Cllrs Boden, Laws, Mockett and Nawaz.

There was a much shorter agenda and I'll highlight the main points raised.

**Prior to the Public Forum, the Chair Cllr Miscandlon stated He did not want any 'political rhetoric from members of the public to members of the Council – if you do, I will ask you to be quiet and sit down - so no politics please.**



**Public Forum:** There was some discontentment members of the public on this occasion.

**Mr. Patrick Nightingale :-**

*Can you please confirm what the correct procedure is at council meetings for public to speak.*

*It was explained by the chair at the last WTC meeting that those wishing to speak had to confirm as such prior to the allotted 15mins.*

*Duly those that requested to speak was allowed, however at the end of the last speaker another member of the public audience (FDC councillor Steve Tierney) indicated to speak and was invited by the chair to do so, surely this is out of process otherwise why have the request at the beginning.*

*This person was allowed to attack the previous speaker (Peter Bibb) and that previous speaker was not allowed to counter the other's comments leaving him at a disadvantage. It felt to myself as a bystander that this was a deliberate attempt by WTC to silence a member of the public sharing his and I am sure many others thoughts, possibly due to the very articulate and specific points he raised on that particular subject.*

*I find this behaviour unacceptable, undemocratic and in truth bullying.*

*My understanding is everyone has the right to their opinion even if it doesn't sit with the majority.*

*This incident did not show the proceedings of a WTC in a good way and certainly falls way below the standard I would expect of representatives of my hometown.*

*(picture LinkedIn©)*

**Mr. Steve Robertson** :- *At the meeting on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of June 2023, the Council elected a leader and deputy leader and we by which I mean the public and the Councillors who were not involved in this decision were given an explanation as to how this would benefit the Council and the Town. During the Public Forum of the meeting 20<sup>th</sup> July – I asked the question in order to show that this isn't just a position in name only could the new leader of the Council to come to the full Council meeting prepared to say what their objectives are for the coming year and how they plan to achieve them. Subsequently the elected Councillor resigned and on the 21<sup>st</sup> September Cllr Nawaz was elected to the post and apart from a statement from him that it was an absolute honour to be leader of this Council and Whittlesey and its beautiful Villages - Nothing....*

*At the last months Council meeting when a new leader of Whittlesey Town Council was elected as asked if Cllr Nawaz could summarise what he had done as 'Leader' – and what Cllr Mockett intends to do in the role. As neither of these incumbents has tabled an agenda item in this respect to explain or justify their role. We the public can only conclude that the role is actually a position in name only as we suspected. I think it is somewhat a pointless exercise.*

**Mr. Stephen Hodson** :- *Commented on the World War II celebrations around the various Markets towns in our area. They all had 'lit lanterns' in their streets – Whittlesey doesn't. I am going to suggest the Whittlesey Town Council procure a lantern for such events in the future.*

*Whittlesey Rifle Club is very successful and the present Chair Max Skelton is a World Champion, if you're not aware of it – you should make yourself aware of it because I think the chap should receive some recognition*

**The Chair Cllr Miscandlon Suspends Standing Orders** – Concerning the Beacon mentioned – I have had a discussion with the RBL who are at this moment in time securing funding for a Beacon and I am meeting with their representative at the Manor on Tuesday afternoon. A Beacon was already suggested between 2015 and 2017 and wasn't taken up. The only Councillor who really supported it – because I made the suggestion because I was the Mayor the last time was Ralph Butcher. It is gathering pace now and they are looking into the costs and that will be looked at on Tuesday. The RBL have a considerable amount of funding in place already.

Re Mr Nightingale – Under my Chairmanship nothing like that will happen again.

**Mr Robert Windle** :- *The Friends of The Manor meeting have also discussed a Beacon. Spoke about the BIG BASH this Sunday. Thanks to the National Lottery and EDP.*

*WTC made payment towards the band playing. Last year 150 classic vehicles this year 300. Swimming Gala going on at the same time. Parking has all been sorted, a cricket match also going on.*

*Sadley there was to be a Fly Pass – but after the tragic accident where a Spitfire crashed in Lincolnshire.*

*The Booklet is out on the Guide to Whittlesey.*

*The Fishing Platform are installed, thank you so much to Cllr Roy Gerstner, Cllr Eamonn Dorling, Robin Sutton from Neighbourhood Watch, and also Roy Bridson.*

*14 platforms in time for the big Bash.*

*He had a fantastic afternoon at Willow Court a place of residence for Senior Citizens – not a Care Home or Nursing Home – we had the big Bash Olympics down there.*

**Items for discussion** :- Communications proposed by Cllr Dorling.

This was to do in context of the Facebook page was created initially purported to be the official Whittlesey Town Council page where communications could take place and questions could be answered by councillors.

The administrators were exclusively members of one political party, When politically sensitive context was displayed on the page it declared itself still to be the Whittlesey Town Council 'Unofficial page' - and excluded input and access from any Councillor that was not aligned to the majority party. This behaviour cannot be tolerated and must not be perceived as representing Whittlesey Town Council.

Cllr Dorling then went on to propose what methods of communication we will proceed with in addition to post, telephone and the Whittlesey Town Council Website, specifically whether Social Media will be used – how it will be regulated and whether any additional forms of communication will be equally accessible to all members of Whittlesey Town Council.

Secondly depending on the outcome of my first proposal is the establishment of a Social Media Policy for example the one placed on the LGA policy template.

A lively debate took place about what was 'official and what may be unofficial'

Cllr Sennit Clough noted that it could not have been an official Facebook Page representing the Council unless the Clerk being the administrator.

Cllr Miscandlon noted that possibly it was mis-named be polite – I am not any Social Media sites. It must not be derogatory in any way to any Councillor at any time.

Cllr Gerstner I think where the confusion has come from the very beginning – we were all under the belief and the public that it was the Whittlesey Town Council FB page, later on irrespective of the rules (we were not aware of the rules at the time) – It became the 'Unofficial Page' – the concern still is the 'Trade Mark' Whittlesey Town Council has been tarnished.

I use the word lightly not heavily – I call myself anything unofficially, but when it comes to a public body like ours even though we are a small town council makes no difference.

If a group of people want to put together a social media site then that is fine, it's a free country and free world we're in a free democracy but is pushing the boundaries, I wouldn't say stealing – that's too strong a word but obtaining the Whittlesey Town Council trademark.

**The Chairman totally agreed**

The discussion went on for some time.....

The Chairman went on to say he would like to see the site closed down – reopened with not using the same system as they have at the moment.

The item should be returned to F&P (Finance & Policy) – a full discussion on the validity of what was going at the moment and how that can be moved forward.

**Item agenda - Weeds** – this is being deferred because Cllr Boden who was going to speak is not here for personal reasons. Deferred to the next meeting.

**Item agenda – Councillor conduct and respect** – Cllr Wicks.

The Chairman pointed out that no written proposal was sent to the Clerk, Cllr Wicks stated it was carried over from the last meeting where it was requested well in advance of the meeting.

Date of the next full Council meeting ;- Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> July 18:30

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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 7,800+ postings on this site.**

**I had over 4,000,000 hits 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).

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FRG 2022



**ARMED FORCES WEEKEND**  
**WHITTLESEY 2024**  
**In the town Centre**  
*Live Bands - Living History*  
*Market - Hot Food - Bar*  
**& LOTS LOTS MORE**  
**29th -30th JUNE**

Logos at the bottom of the poster include: COMMUNITY FUND, MUSEUM MEDIA, Whittlesey Town Council, Pathway Church, Whittlesey, Pondersbridge & Coates, and CLARION FUTURES.