

# WTC Meeting Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> October 2025

**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.

AGENDA (Previously published on this Web-Blog).

16 Members of the public in attendance – Member of the Press in attendance.

This report is a condensed version of the meeting, I gave my apologies for non-attendance. Notes taken by Cllr Barry Wainwright.

Format and slight editing has taken place to make web-friendly.

**Present:** Cllr's CB (Chris Boden), ED (Eamonn Dorling), BNW (Barry Wainwright), BW (Bob Wicks), AM (Alex Miscandlon), PB (Peter Bibb), DD (Dianna Dickinson), DL (Dee Laws), JM (Jason Mockett).

**F147/2025.** To receive apologies from absent members and the reason for the absence.

RG (Roy Gerstner), GSG (Gurninder Singh Gill), HN (Haq Nawas), SA (Saeed Arman).

**F148/2025.** 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 and the Council to decide which items are to be discussed as confidential under agenda item number F164/2025

DL: Planning portfolio holder for FDC

## **F149/2025 Social Enterprise East of England.**

Presentation by Deb Lee, MD Social Enterprise East England.

BNW: How many people? – 6 consultants

DL: How much money on the pot? - £250k between three organisations

PB: examples? – Finding good jobs for people out of work, using community hubs, run by SE. Sharing resources with local businesses.

JM: What do you need? Buy in from local businesses. How do we help? – Any support like that is good. It could use its own resources, spend locally, reduce 'leakage' out of the town.

Can we bring things into the town if the resource isn't available locally?

DL: Have presented to Whittlesey Business Forum – WTC the first, event at Library coming up on 27<sup>th</sup> October.

ED: many commercial properties owned and rented. It is never going to be easy to purchase a property. – Not the preferred model (leaky buckets). Common in High Streets.

### **F150/2025. Street Scene Officer Report & CCTV update:**

Already published on this Website.

JM: CCTV no longer issuing reports? WTC to take up with Aaron Lock.

Still no police Liaison meeting.

### **F151/2025 Police Report and figures.**

(4 police present). + Sgt ????: Lots of changes, meetings will be sorted out.

Parking always an issue – it comes under anti-social vehicle use – not top priority. (risk, threat and harm). Opportunities to manage parking is limited.

DL: Monthly meetings are very important. Information sharing all ways. Can confirm that Councillors can still use the private address. – Not sure. Will test.

### **F152/2025 To confirm and sign the Minutes from the Meeting of the Council on Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> September 2025. OK'd**

### **F153/2025 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.

#### **16 Present**

**Peter Baxter:** In 2017 NatWest vacated Market Street, 2018 building designated 'at risk'. Cllr Laws "important to review these areas and...preserve". Should understand what ramification of 'at risk' meant. Was the law (listed building law) not considered?

**Chris Terrey:** Land between St Andrews & 62 Church Steet – owned by FDC – not in green spaces initially. Now in area A3. What will happen to this green space?

Previously under threat on 70s & 80s. CCC wanted to buy for a school, but ideas changed. Land handed to FDC free, as public amenity.

**(RG Note: There is a short article on 'history about this land at the end of this report)**

**Lynda Day:** Outside body reports always on the agenda. Only one report ever made. LGA states key function to feedback other =issues. All meetings attended as Councillors should be reported in the minutes. Eg Kings Dyke bus shelter & The A605 trees issues and concerns.

**Robert Windle:** Radio Fenland more than a radio station. 4<sup>th</sup> council meeting attended recently. Try & promote 'good stories. Not all volunteers paid. An asset to the town. I would like to bring a knockout back'.

**Cheryl Wright:** Resident of Whittlesey NW. Election literature. Disappointed that Conservative have advised to 'vote tactically' rather than on merits of candidates, with a view to stopping Reform. Find it abhorrent for this to be posted by town council members.

**Stephen Hodson:** several times recommended the council contact UK infrastructure bank to fund road relief. Contacted himself, got an immediate response that up to £10m available. Another organisation NISTA may be useful contact.

**Patrick Nightingale:** can WTC bring pressure to bear on the state of the roads? Recent accident on B1040. Many other roads. Somebody is going to get killed. Councillors need to get involved. Standing Orders Suspended: It's not highways Agency, its CCC Highways. Lots of money moved to Cambridge. SO Resumed.

**Cllr Eamonn Dorling:** Speaking within the public forum [public applause]  
Here is the notes ED used.

Recently, a departing a Councillor was quoted in newspapers and on social media as saying

**'The Original Ver was/is a misquote and has been removed'.**

**I am informed by Dr. Liz Sennitt Clough of her quote (below)**



” While I would never choose such words myself, I understand the frustration behind them. Too often, our public meetings have resembled a **Muppet Show** — where reasoned and sincere voices from the gallery are dismissed or ignored, and critical issues raised by our community fail to receive the attention they deserve. (*Statlor & Wordorf*)

Time and again, residents have come before this Council with carefully researched and passionately delivered presentations. These individuals take the time to engage, to contribute, and to strengthen our decision-making — yet they are frequently met with silence. This is not simply discourteous. It signals a **closed mindset**, stifles **learning**, and **erodes the public’s trust** in us as their elected representatives.

Our community chose us to **listen**, **respond**, and **act** on their behalf. While it is our duty to scrutinise and sometimes challenge the suggestions we receive, it is equally our duty to acknowledge them — openly, respectfully, and transparently. When feedback is ignored, transparency suffers, and with it, the credibility of this Council.

Therefore, I propose that, with immediate effect:

**Every speaker in the Public Forum should receive a written response within five working days of their presentation. Copies of those responses should be circulated to all Councillors.**

This simple measure would demonstrate courtesy, accountability, and genuine engagement — values we claim to uphold but too rarely show in practice. [public applause]

### **F154/2025 Agenda items for Discussion.**

Proposal: Proposal that WTC define how green spaces and other assets that currently belong to FDC are integrated into WTC so that obligations of ownership can be planned for.

Especially (but [not] limited to) the transfer of Platinum Wood. - ED

First brought up on 20th March – if FDC dissolved, what planning is WTC making to mitigate changes? Platinum Wood held by WTC but owned by FDC. Others too.

No plans to deal with it?

CB: Not actually up to WTC, but an FDC decision. Still waiting to see what happens on Local Government reform. Plans are rushed and behind target. FDC expecting information on May/June 2026. Surrey was meant to have plans end Aug, now planning at end Oct. Don't know if LGR is going ahead, or what timetable is. CB working on basis.

that it will go ahead. Important to have strategy for whole of FDC. There is a plan to ensure that local control is maintained on local assets, but not politic to announce yet.

DL: have discussed previously. Would it be advisable to put application to FDC to ask for Jubilee wood to be leased on peppercorn rent.

PB: Imperative for WTC to give the local flavor. Need to be ready to respond with an agreed opinion on behalf of whole council.

JM: Need an asset register to be visible for unified approach. Under threat, even if LGR doesn't go ahead -

DD: if pool all assets, how much? I need to keep it local. Keep all assets together.

CB: I need to be careful about what it says. Trying to protect for medium to long term. Town Councils are an integral part of the plan. Will be coming to the town councils with good offer. Need something to be legally watertight.

AM: we know where the significant places are. May be smaller places, like verges JM: Can FDC help get access to 'The Park'? Disgrace that public open space is locked.

DL: Kept locked to prevent illegal encampments.

CB: will take action & report back.

### **F155/2025. To receive Councillor & outside body reports.**

JARL meeting minutes shared by JM.

(RG Note, this was the liaison group meeting which has been reported previously on this web-blog)

CB: will be objecting to these minutes. – did **not** say there was no dust.

BNW: No warnings on drone H&S

### **F156/2025. To report on the minutes of the Finance & Policy Meeting on Monday 13<sup>th</sup> October 2025**

CB: was made temporary PO – that now ceased. CB will go through all transactions to go on scribe for July, August & September, October do together, then clerk will take over.

### **F157/2025 To report the financial documents.**

**To report the bank reconciliation to September 2025.**

Not yet on Scribe as all VAT invoices are in.

Total money held on 30/09 £188k – low points in cash position, before Precept comes in. Almost 12 months expenditure. Got liquidity to deal with emergencies, or take on large project., or reduce precept.

To report on the list of payments uncashed payments.

Circulated at F&P – agreed to recommend approval, subject to four clarified.

2 direct debits we can't currently explain.

**Conditional** approval 2<sup>nd</sup> BW, unanimous

Cleaning contract to be procured for 3-day cleaning. 2<sup>nd</sup> DD Unanimous

ED had proposed hot water storage system. Payback < 6years.

Recommend proposal 2<sup>nd</sup> ED, unanimous

Agreed to purchase bicycle rack. £40.

Will be fitted by Fenland Electrical 2<sup>nd</sup> DL

Confidential Discussion on commercial rent JM authorised to pursue. Leave until next month.

Request for £3k donation to extravaganza 2<sup>nd</sup> DL unanimous.

To report the year-to-date figures.

No YTD figures until scribe up to date. Present next meeting.

**F/158/2025.** To report the minutes from Planning Meeting Monday 13<sup>th</sup> October 2025

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**F/159/2025.** To report the minutes from Community Projects meeting Monday 8<sup>th</sup> September 2025.

### **F160/2025. Consultations**

Fens Reservoir consultation is now taking place online.

ED: Anglian Water presenting at Queen Street Church –

Monday 19<sup>th</sup> November 15:00 – 20:00

DL: don't know about it – will put details on web site is ED forwards on.

### **F161/2025 Information only.**

#### **Update on Manor Leisure Centre - CB**

Last consultation was cancelled at 24 hours' notice and no information given.

Apology given by FDC for oversight. Consultations suspended due to by-election. Returning officers' decision.

No consultation can be announced before by election. But report has to go to FDC cabinet by 9<sup>th</sup> November, papers published on 2<sup>nd</sup>.

Determined that it will be more widely promoted. Many consultations are lip service only. Not the case

here. Looking for some significant change in current proposals. Choices will be made by FDC Councillors, not officers. Will be a lot on social media on 24<sup>th</sup> October.

DL: Have emailed portfolio holder who will do his utmost to spread the word widely.  
Suggested the Manor Leisure centre would be available in the evening.

#### **Update on A605 Kings Dyke Bridge-**

Finally persuaded CCC to communicate. Many failures over 18 months. Pushing hard to re-open 2-way working. Concerned at possibility of North Bank closures. Asking for a scheme to be put in to minimise such disruption. Asked for temporary 2-way work. Officers have gone further and are seeking professional advice about how soon the traffic lights can be removed as majority work completed. County Cllr Fisher helping with what happens afterwards.  
Don't want Jones Bros to hand over too early.

BNW: Can they give an end date?

CB: Encouraged them to be not state date.

BW: given problems at Ely By-pass, surely CCC would not be willing to see Jones Bros walk away?

CB: impression that CCC keen to get away from it as soon as possible.

#### **Thorney Running Club- ED**

Running club adapted to lower street lighting levels, now have hi-vis and flashing lights for safety. CB: Indication of what residents need to do. Won't get lights changed any time soon.

#### F162/2025 Invitations.

Vision 27/10/2026 at Library.

#### F163/2025. Date of next meeting – **Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> November 2025**

#### **F164/2025– Exclusion of the press & public**

Pursuant to section 1 (2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act, it is resolved that, due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, the public and press leave the meeting during consideration of items to be discussed at F148/2025 for Peel House Flats.

F165/2025. To discuss those items previously agreed at agenda item.

None

#### **LAND BETWEEN ST ANDREW'S CHURCH AND 62 CHURCH STREET (The Park)**

*This block of land, currently owned by Fenland District Council, is within the Whittlesey Conservation Area. In 2021, when the draft Whittlesey Green Spaces Assessment was published, this tract of land wasn't included. After raising the matter with Councillor Mason and Councillor Laws, it was eventually incorporated into the final Whittlesey Green Spaces Assessment dated September 2021, where it's marked as area STA3.*

*As we know, Fenland District Council will no longer exist if the government's plans to re-structure local government come into effect. What will happen to this green space currently owned by Fenland?*

*The Park has been under threat previously, as was reported widely in the local press throughout the late 1970s and into the 1980s. To summarise the articles that appeared variously in the Peterborough Standard, Cambridgeshire Times and Whittlesey Reporter, the area known as The Park was part of a larger block of pasture and grassland bordering Church Street, Park Lane and the river, which was, at that time, owned by a local farmer, Mr Guirl, who lived in Briggate West. Under threat of compulsory purchase, it was reluctantly sold to Cambridgeshire County Council who wanted to build a school on the site. But an alternative site was found, and the land became surplus to the County Council's requirements. Next, CCC applied to FDC for planning permission to build 8 houses and garages on the land.*

*A petition to oppose this application was raised and signed by 900 residents; a public meeting was held in St Andrew's parish room; the then local MP, Clement Freud, became involved and offered his support; and Whittlesey Town Council's Planning Committee recommended refusal.*

*A subsequent meeting of Fenland District Council's Planning Committee also recommended refusal. To cut a long story short, the eventual outcome was that the section of land bordering Church Street, together with a 30ft wide strip at the rear of St Andrew's church, was handed over by the County Council to Fenland District Council, **free of charge, for use as a public amenity**, providing Fenland maintained it.*

*As far as I know, it's never been a public amenity (the gate is kept locked) but Fenland does maintain it. And it's an important green space. It's been a green space for a long time.*

*So, The Park, in the Conservation Area, is protected for now - along with Whittlesey's other green spaces. But it is important to ensure it is protected for the future.*

*Will Whittlesey Town Council, therefore, please take the necessary steps to do so.*

*(A concerned Whittlesey resident)*

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[www.whittleseytowncouncil.gov.uk](http://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.

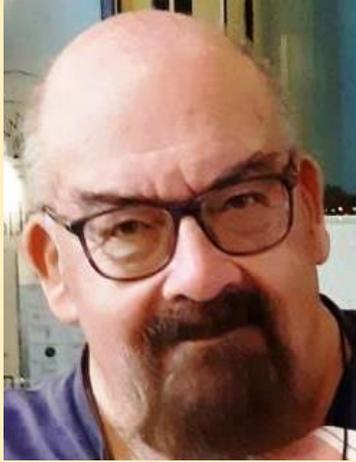
I am aware that some Councillors post on Social Media.

**I have done so for more than 15+ years both as a member of the public and as a Town and District Councillor.**

I have made **9,800+** postings on this site. **9 Million+** hits on this site.

I have been elected as the **Independent** Fenland District Councillor for The South Ward of Whittlesey along with Gurninder Singh Gill (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 do 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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### Local events - meet our team and find out more

LOCATION	DATE	TIME
St Wendreda's Church Hall, March, PE15 9PY	Monday 3 Nov	3pm-8pm
Wimblington Parish Hall, PE15 0QT	Friday 7 Nov	1pm-6pm
Bar Hill Village Hall, CB23 8SU	Saturday 8 Nov	10am-3pm
Queen Street Church, Whittlesey, PE7 1AY	Monday 10 Nov	3pm-8pm
Bluntisham Village Hall, PE28 3LR	Tuesday 11 Nov	11am-4pm
Downham Market Town Hall, PE38 9DW	Thursday 13 Nov	3pm-8pm
Doddington Village Hall, PE15 0TG	Friday 14 Nov	1pm-6pm
The Bricstan Hall, Chatteris, PE16 6BE	Saturday 15 Nov	10am-3pm
Manea Village Hall, PE15 0JN	Tuesday 18 Nov	3pm-8pm
Swavesey Memorial Hall, CB24 4QU	Friday 21 Nov	1pm-6pm



See a 3D model at our events

Consultation Event Anglian Water New Fens Reservoir – Queen Street Church.

Monday 10<sup>th</sup> November.  
15:00 to 20:00pm