

MINUTES of the meeting of the TOWN COUNCIL held in the Queen Elizabeth School on the 24th November, 1983.

PRESENT: Councillor B.P. Doherty (Town Mayor):
Councillors Mrs. E.C. Conway, M.J. Hopkinson, W.R. Looker,
J.H. Lewis, Mrs. J.M. McCartney, Mrs. M.L. Middlemiss,
R.T.D. Hughes, C.W. Parcell and A.E. Sursham.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors J.H. James, C.E. Dalleywater, Mrs. C. Parker, and C. Parker.

TOWN MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Town Mayor made the following announcements:

(a) The Trader Newspaper - that he was saddened by the fact that, again, a Councillor had chosen to ventilate views in the Press rather than in the Council Chamber; and further, that the newspaper had not checked the accuracy of the views before going to print. Whilst supporting the principle of a free press, the Town Mayor was of the opinion that fairness and absence of bias were sadly lacking in the particular newspaper. Other Councillors indicated their apprehensions about the content of the article and the propriety of its author. In response to the announcement and related comments, Councillor Mrs. Conway iterated her freedom to make statements and pass opinions in the Press without explanation or apology for error of facts.

The Town Mayor and the Town Clerk gave information to correct errors contained in the offending letter, namely -

- that from the 1st April to 16th November, 1983, the recorded cost of grasscutting at Godspa was £42. 35
- that the Council's grant of £3,000 to Godspa was not only for the play area and Minute 81/20 of the meeting held on the 23rd April, 1982 contained the facts of the decision - and
- that £1,000 was not removed from the Churchyard budget at the Special Meeting held on the 8th November 1983 as no budget existed from which to make such a removal.

In conclusion of the subject, the Town Mayor indicated his willingness to discuss any subject with Councillor Mrs. Conway at almost any time.

(b) Wood Green Animal Shelter - that he had been privileged to visit the Wood Green Animal Shelter which was to provide about 15 employment opportunities in Godmanchester.

(c) Buttermell Meadow Youth Project - that the dedication of the land by the District Council to the Town Council was to be discussed further with officers of the District Council but that, nevertheless, another meeting comprising representatives of the County Council and Town Council with Community Education Officers was to be held. A redundant mobile classroom was to be sought and there would be a need for fund raising.

(d) Street lighting - that the project was still being delayed by the failure of Eastern Electricity to make connections.

(e) Playscheme - that the envisaged meeting was still to take place although hopeful signs were emanating from the School and from within the community.

(f) Police liaison - that in relation to community relations, P C Gipson was the Liaison Officer and the officer with whom to communicate at Huntingdon Police Station, tel. 56111 ext. 501.

(g) War Memorial - that he was constrained to express sadness and concern at the photograph published in the Hunts Post which was both distasteful and depicted a lack of respect.

(h) Official function in Huntingdon - that his sole presence at the formal opening of a shop in Huntingdon was due to circumstances beyond his control and well understood by the Town Mayor of Huntingdon.

(i) Next meeting - that in response to a number of indications he had agreed that the next meeting should be held on the 15th December as originally planned.

83/86 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on the 27th October and the Special Meeting held on the 8th November, 1983 were confirmed as correct records and signed by the Town Mayor.

Arising therefrom, the following observations/decisions were made:

Minute 83/78 - that the Town Mayor's interest in Godsna could not be described as pecuniary: his intention in vacating the Chair was to enable it to be occupied by someone quite impartial to the subject. On the same subject, Councillor Hopkinson reported that a meeting had been held with Godsna officials but that more information needed to be digested before a full report could be made to the Town Council.

Minute 83/79 - that the District Valuer was not in a position to submit his report on the St. Anne's Lane site; that endeavours be made to employ a retired person to clean up the site.

Minute 83/80 - that two amounts of money remained to be collected.

Minute 83/82 - that Fairy Avenue had had no street lights since last February; that certain old street lights could have been left connected until the new ones were energised; that no maintenance of existing standards was being carried out other than maintenance was being carried out on a Saturday morning; and that having regard to the foregoing further strong representations be made.

(Councillor Hughes here left the meeting)

Minute 83/85 - that the proposed increased in precept was within about 0.3% of the figure quoted in guidelines issued by the District Council to Town Councils and certain Parish Councils:

- that having regard to the likelihood of anniversary celebrations of the Huntingdon and Godmanchester/Salon de Provence/Wertheim link in 1984, the budget provision for Twinning might not be a fair reflection of the Council's contribution if such celebration took place - and a proposal to adjust the figure might be made at the next meeting in the light of information to be obtained from Huntingdon Town Council.

(Councillor Hughes here returned to the meeting)

83/87 PLANNING APPLICATIONS

Following consideration of the following planning applications it was

Resolved.- that the Director of Planning be informed that the Town Council recommend the approval of the undermentioned applications:

- (a) Extensions and alterations to Animal Shelter, Kingsbush Farm; and
- (b) Outline for vehicular access from A.14 to Muir Housing Association development.

83/88 ACCOUNTS

Resolved.- that the following payments be made:

Smiths Gore - Allotment rent, 1st half year	£120 - 00
L.C. Jay & Son Ltd. - Town entry signs	96 - 60
(Councillor Hughes indicated that the manufacturer of the other two signs was now back in Godmanchester and would be undertaking their manufacture shortly)	
J. A. Davie	209 - 26
Inland Revenue	37 - 50
Petty Cash	20 - 00

In response to a question on the number of people who had inspected the accounts, books or papers whilst they were on deposit prior to their audit, the Town Clerk replied that no-one had availed himself of the opportunity.

83/89 QUEEN ELIZABETH SCHOOL

- (a) Double glazing of a window.

The Town Clerk submitted an offer by the Friends of the Queen Elizabeth School to glaze temporarily the windows in the small hall. Upon examination of the specification, it was seen that the offer related to covering the window at the river end by a rigid insulation board. The Town Council were of the opinion that the window light should be retained and accordingly

Resolved.- that the Friends of the Queen Elizabeth School be warmly thanked for their offer but asked if they would be prepared to provide suitable curtaining for the window in lieu of the rigid insulation board.

- (b) Rateable Value.

The Town Council were reminded of their decision to appeal against the District Valuation Officer's assessment of the building having regard to its lack of facilities, and the Town Clerk reported that after conducting the appeal to the point of reaching the Valuation Panel, he had been offered a reduced assessment by the Valuation Officer - namely, a reduction to £150 g.v./£98 R.v.

Resolved.- that the reduced proposal be accepted and that the Town Clerk be authorised to sign the appropriate agreement.

(Councillor Mrs. Conway here left the meeting)

- (c) Hire of Hall for Slimnastics.

Following consideration of a request for the use of the large hall for slimnastics on up to three occasions per week from early in the new year, it was

Resolved.- that the use of the large hall be approved for the purpose requested at the scale charge of £5 plus a heating charge per session at the rate of £3 per period of 24 hours (minimum £1).

In the light of the foregoing decision, the Town Council agreed to reconsider the decision taken in respect of the application to use the Queen Elizabeth School for the sale of "seconds".

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A. G. Smith', written in a cursive style.

Town Mayor