

GODMANCHESTER TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD IN THE QUEEN ELIZABETH SCHOOL ON THURSDAY 16 MARCH 2000

PRESENT: Councillor Mrs GODLEY, Town Mayor

Councillors D COMBEN, K GABB, A HOOKER, Mrs HULL,
E KYNOCH, Mrs LOOKER, R NORRIS, S SPENCER, A SURSHAM,
Mrs TYLER, C VANE PERCY, G WILSON
Town Clerk: W D BUTTERWORTH

IN ATTENDANCE: Mace Bearer H FOREN

APOLOGIES: Councillor Mrs MOORE

PRESENT: 13 members of the public

TOWN MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor reported that she had represented the Town on 9 occasions since the last meeting. The Mayor informed the Council that John Hollowood had resigned from the Town Council with effect from 5 March 2000. She wished to record her personal thanks and that of the whole Council for all the work he had carried out during his time as a councillor.

She advised the meeting that Nomination Papers for the May election for the Town Council were available from the Town Office. However, candidates must submit their papers to Pathfinder House and not to the Town Office. The closing date for nominations was noon on 3 April 2000.

On 4 March 2000 the Mayor had presented a set of Godmanchester tablemats to the Vicar on behalf of the Council to mark his departure from the Parish. He had asked that his thanks be passed to all concerned.

Many people had commented very favourably about the bulbs that had been planted throughout Godmanchester to mark the Millennium. The Mayor wished to record a formal vote of thanks to Mrs Mary Stokes for all the effort she had made to ensure that the project was a success.

The Mayor asked that Agenda Item 00/022, Planning, be moved forward to allow Cllr Wilson to leave the meeting early. AGREED

00/017 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The Minutes of the meeting held on 17 February 2000 were APPROVED and signed as an accurate and complete record.

Councillor Mrs Hull arrived at 7.45 pm

00/018 MATTERS ARISING

The following matters arising from the last meeting were incomplete or required further action:

99/048(2): Town Mini-Guide – Councillor VANE PERCY reported that he was continuing to develop the new version of the guide; a full draft would be presented to the Council in May 2000

99/082(5): Red blocks & road signs – yet another holding reply had been received from CCC on 28 February 2000 promising a response within a further 4 weeks.

99/101: Rising damp at JF – Mr Stokes' report was awaited.

00/005: Costs of fire alarm incident at JF - Councillor SPENCER reported that he had written to the organisation concerned and that they had agreed to meet the bill in full. A cheque was awaited.

00/005: Christmas Lights – I S Munro had been asked to carry out the work in accordance with the directive from HDC. Concerns were expressed about the danger of corrosion in the empty sockets. Councillor VANE PERCY asked that his E-mail on the subject be circulated to all councillors.

00/007(R&A): Outstanding bill at JF – Councillor SPENCER had approached the debtor who accepted that the bill was justified but felt that it was impractical to recover the money from the people involved. It was DECIDED not to pursue the matter further. However, it was AGREED that if a similar event was proposed this year, the hire fee would not be waived and a deposit of £50 would be required. The deposit would be returned in full only if the facilities were left in a clean and tidy state.

00/011 Rats at Cow Lane – HDC had confirmed that a private contractor carried out rodent control at the landfill site. The methods used were legal.

00/011 Lights near cemetery - Awaiting a reply from CCC.

00/015(Env) Spring Clean – It was decided to "spring clean" The Causeway and the shallow water alongside it on Saturday, 15 April 2000 at 10.00 am. Three councillors offered to provide waders and the Town Clerk was to obtain litter-pickers, rubber gloves and rubbish sacks from HDC.

00/019 CORRESPONDENCE

The correspondence listed at Appendix A was addressed. The following was agreed (the numbers refer to the Appendix serial number):

1. The Council noted the Wicksteed quotations for play surfaces and the matter was deferred to the Recreation & Amenities WP for recommendations.
2. The Council noted with regret that Huntingdon Freeman were unable to support skatepark project.
3. The Council noted the GMC Cricket Club's decision not to advertise on the pavilion roof.

4. The Council shared the concerns about the misuse of the play area in Devana Park. The police were being informed of all incidents.
5. At 9.00 pm the meeting was adjourned to allow the public to ask questions. These all related to the complaints from the residents from the vicinity of Fox Grove. The details are at Appendix D. The meeting resumed at 9.20 pm.
6. Councillor Mrs HULL explained that there was a strong possibility that a teacher would be found to run the summer play scheme.
7. The matter of the planned Leisure Fairs was referred to Recreation & Amenities WP.
8. Councillor VANE PERCY explained the background to the plethora of documents relating to tourism in Huntingdonshire. However, the references to Godmanchester were at best disjointed and at worst missing altogether. He agreed to write to HDC to suggest that many of the brochures could be merged to form one or 2 more meaningful documents.
9. The Council ACCEPTED the quotation from Rundle Ltd for new signpost arm at a cost of £71.40 + VAT and P&P.
10. The request for help with the selection of a site for the air quality monitoring equipment was referred to the Environment WP.
11. The Council noted with concern that the kitchen in the Town Hall had failed a Public Heath inspection. As the Council owned the building, it was AGREED to pay £460.00 from the Property budget for the necessary refurbishment.

00/020 ACCOUNTS

The accounts set out in Appendix B were APPROVED.

The Town Clerk advised the Council that the QES should be subjected to a full electrical check and that the lights, fans and extractors needed cleaning. He had obtained a quotation in the sum of £380 +VAT and the cost of any replacement parts. He sought permission to proceed with the work. APPROVED.

The Town Clerk reported that the electricity for the Town Office and the Town Hall floodlights was included in the Senior Citizens' bill. It was AGREED that the Council should pay £25 per quarter to the Senior Citizens towards the cost of the electricity.

Councillor GABB informed the meeting that the annual charity football match in aid of Papworth Hospital would be held at JF on 28 May 2000. He asked that the Council waive the normal hire charges for the event. AGREED

Councillor GODLEY asked that the hire charge for the QES for the meeting of the Neighbourhood Watch on 6 April 2000 be waived. AGREED

00/021 GODMANCHESTER CHARITIES

Councillors GODLEY, KYNOCH, LOOKER and SURSHAM were confirmed as Trustees of the Godmanchester Charities. The Town Clerk was to advise the solicitors, Wilkinson & Butler, accordingly. The Town Clerk was also to seek clarification of the current conditions attached to the charities and their awards.

00/022 PLANNING APPLICATIONS AND CORRESPONDENCE

The applications and correspondence set out in Appendix C were considered. The Town Clerk was to advise HDC of the Council's recommendations.

Councillor WILSON reported that the hearing into the appeal by Twigden Homes for the development of the site at Roman Way had taken place that morning. Councillor SURSHAM had attended the hearing and reinforced the Town's line as contained in the written evidence. HDC had also supported the GMC position primarily on the grounds that the application was premature coming, as it did, before the hearing into the proposed amendments to the Local Plan. The date for the decision had not been announced but it was anticipated that it would be given within 6 weeks.

Councillor Mrs LOOKER declared an interest in the next item and left the room.

The draft GMC evidence to the hearing for the Huntingdonshire Local Plan Alteration Inquiry had been circulated to councillors prior to the meeting. Councillor WILSON was complimented on the content and presentation. Councillor COMBEN proposed a small amendment to the layout. The amendment was AGREED and the document was APPROVED. The Town Clerk was to submit the evidence to HDC.

Councillor Mrs LOOKER rejoined the meeting.

Councillor COMBEN introduced a draft letter concerning the enforcement of the planning permission conditions for 6 Cambridge Road. Councillor Mrs GODLEY declared an interest. The letter was APPROVED and the Town Clerk was to send it to HDC.

Councillor WILSON left the meeting at 8.45 pm.

00/023 WORKING PARTY (WP) REPORTS

Finance. The Finance WP had not met

Ad Hoc (Agency). The Council noted that the Agency Agreement would terminate at the end of March. No one had applied for the post of handyman despite vigorous advertising in the Town. The most urgent matter was to ensure that the weekly visual inspections of the 4 play areas were still carried out from 1 April 2000. Councillor COMBEN decided that the WP must discuss the issue. A meeting was arranged for 7.30 pm on 30 March at 26 Earning Street.

The Town Clerk had been contacted by Mr S Ambrose from Fergusons confirming that they would commence the new grounds maintenance contract in the week starting 3 April 2000. Although it would have been preferable for the Town Clerk to have walked the sites with the contractor before work started, this had not proved possible. However, it had been agreed that

the Town Clerk would meet with the contractors after the first cut/rubbish cycle to clarify any points. The Town Clerk was to write to Fergusons and confirm those arrangements.

Environment. The Environment WP had not met. The next meeting would be at 8.00 pm on 30 March 2000 at 26 Earning Street.

The Town Clerk reported that Enviroserve had ordered all the trees and shrubs for Buttermel and that work would take place in the week starting 20 March 2000.

Councillor VANE PERCY left the meeting at 10.10 pm.

Recreation and Amenities. The WP had not met but a fax had been received from HDC regarding the skatepark project. It confirmed that HDC would assume responsibility for the ramps and would undertake the necessary technical inspections to meet its insurer's requirements. HDC had considered other suppliers and selected the best option. HDC would order the ramps and supervise the installation including the base. All quotations, provision of equipment and the programme of works would be agreed with GMC. HDC would meet the initial bills while GMC would be invoiced for the later stage works. The Town Clerk was to write to HDC and authorise the GMC contribution up to a maximum of £13,500. He was also to advise Wicksteed that its proposal had not been accepted. Councillor SPENCER advised the Town Council that he would work closely with the staff at HDC and that he would also work with the Skateboard Committee to try to raise addition funds from local businesses. The next meeting of the WP would be at 7.30 pm on 23 March 2000 in the Town Office.

Property. The Property WP had not met

Millennium.

The Town Clerk had agreed with Mr Irving that the bills for the Picnic in the Park would be sent to the Council for payment up to the total of £4000 approved for the event.

A request had been received for financial assistance with the photographic record project. As this included a comprehensive and detailed spreadsheet it had been passed to the Finance WP for a recommendation at next full Council meeting.

The Town Clerk was to pass the dates of the Gala Day (1 July 2000) and the Picnic in the Park (2 July 2000) to the Twinning Association for onward transmission to the Twin Towns

Other Representative Groups. None.

00/024 CCTV

The CCTV system had been installed in the Town Hall and was working satisfactorily. HDC had confirmed that GMC was still under consideration for a real-time CCTV facility under any future Home Office funding that might become available. In the meantime, HDC had given GMC 10 videotapes for use on the Town's system.

Several councillors expressed their dislike of the 3 signs on School Hill declaring that the area was under CCTV surveillance. However, it was understood that there was a need to advertise the presence of the cameras if the desired deterrent value was to be realised. A compromise position was AGREED, namely that the signs would stay in position for 3

months and then the Council would consider removing some or all of them.

00/025 ELECTION OF TOWN MAYOR AND DEPUTY TOWN MAYOR FOR 2000/2001

It had been intended to hold the elections for the next Mayor and Deputy Mayor at this meeting. However, the impending elections for the entire Council on 4 May 2000 cast doubt on the appropriateness of selecting the Mayor and Deputy before then. Many different views were expressed but, on balance, it was DECIDED to delay the selection. A compromise position was AGREED. If 15 or fewer nominations for the Town Council were received by 3 April 2000, then the election for the Mayor and Deputy would take place at the Council meeting on 13 April. However, if there were sufficient nominations to require a poll on 4 May, then the elections would take place at an extraordinary meeting of the Town Council on 8 May 2000.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Councillor GABB asked if it was intended to monitor the use of the skatepark for general use and to see if youngsters from Huntingdon and other villages used the facilities. There was a need to ensure that the project provides value for money.

Councillor Mrs HULL informed the meeting that she would be attending the Huntingdon Youth Town Council on 12 April 2000. Councillor Mrs TYLER volunteered to accompany her.

THE NEXT MEETING WILL BE HELD ON 13 APRIL 2000.

The meeting ended at 10.45 pm Town Mayor