

GODMANCHESTER TOWN COUNCIL MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD IN THE GODMANCHESTER TOWN HALL ON THURSDAY 18 APRIL 2002

PRESENT: Councillor R NORRIS Town Mayor
Councillors D BROWN, M COHEN, D COMBEN, A GOFF, Mrs H HULL, Mrs A
LOOKER, S SPENCER, A SURSHAM, C VANE PERCY
Town Clerk: A J WELTON

APOLOGIES: Councillors Mrs TYLER, Mrs MOORE, WILSON, KYNOCH

PRESENT: There were no members of the public present.

TOWN MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor reported that he had represented the Town on 4 occasions since the last meeting.

The Mayor welcomed Mr Alan WELTON, the new Town Clerk, to his first Town Council Meeting.

The Mayor thanked those Councillors and other members of the public who had turned out to assist in the annual litter pick. It had been a successful event and a total of some 30 bags of rubbish had been collected.

The Mayor reported that he had received a letter of resignation from Cllr HOOKER. He had written to Cllr HOOKER to acknowledge receipt of his letter and thank him for his efforts and support in the past. Huntingdon District Council had been informed.

The Mayor announced that response to the Mayor's Charity Dinner had been good and that all the seats had now been taken for the event.

The Mayor reminded those Councillors who intended to attend the Sunday Brownies/Rainbow church service on Sunday 21st April 2002 that they should meet at the South Door of the church at 1:50

02/021 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 21 March 2002 were APPROVED and signed as an accurate and complete record.

02/022 MODEL CODE OF CONDUCT

The Godmanchester Town Council AGREED to adopt the Model Code of Conduct for Town and Parish Councils in accordance with the Ethical Framework contained in the Local Government Act 2000. The Town Clerk was to advise CALC of the decision so that Godmanchester Town Council could be included in the consolidated press announcement

required by the Act. The Town Clerk was also to advise the Standards Board of England of the decision.

A new Declaration of Acceptance of Office Certificate was issued to each councillor for signature. Register of Members Interests forms were also issued and the Mayor reminded the councillors that there was a legal requirement to return them to the Town Clerk, fully completed, within 28 days. The Town Clerk was to retain a copy and dispatch the originals to HDC.

02/023 MATTERS ARISING

The Outstanding Actions List dated 18 April 2002 was reviewed. The following matters arising from the last meeting were incomplete or required further action: (actions assigned to WPs are dealt with in the appropriate report).

99/048(2) New Town Guide – The artwork was still awaited but the main body of the guide was at the printers.

01/081(Env) Post Street cyclepath – There was to be a meeting in the week beginning 22nd April 2002 with Mr Stinton of CCC to discuss the way ahead.

02/024 CORRESPONDENCE

The correspondence listed at Appendix A not covered by the WP reports was addressed:

The Council noted that DEFRA had published a document concerning Parish & Town council vibrancy and also noted that a copy was available in the Town Office.

CCC had forwarded details for Jointly Funded Improvement Bids for 2002/2003. The Mayor advised that the correspondence was available for perusal in the Town Office.

The Huntingdonshire Local Plan Alteration had arrived and had been copied to all councillors.

An invitation had been to attend the CALC Chairmans' Evening on 14th May 2002. The Mayor indicated that he would attend.

The minutes of the Huntingdonshire District Association meeting held on 14th March 2002 had been received.

02/025 ACCOUNTS

The accounts set out in Appendix B were APPROVED.

02/026 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.

The Town Clerk requested approval for the expenditure of £20.00 for the purchase of the Inspector's Report on the Huntingdon Local Plan. APPROVED.

The Council noted that 2 planning applications (02/01001/FUL & 02/00882/FUL) had been received just before the meeting and had been deferred to the May 2002 Council meeting for recommendation.

02/027 WORKING PARTY (WP) REPORTS

Finance. The WP met on 15th April 2002. With the introduction of the new "lighter touch regime" approach to Audits, it was noted that Income & Expenditure accounts would still be required as at present. The lighter touch would mean that there would be a desk-based review. The cost for an audit for the income/expenditure band incurred would be fixed at £650 for 5 years unless any additional checks were required. An additional requirement of the new regime was that an independent Internal Auditor would be required. The Mayor had approached Mr K Sneath, who had very kindly agreed to undertake this task. Additionally, members of the Town Council would need to confirm that the external auditors appointed by the Audit Commission did not have a conflict of interest which would prevent them from carrying out their duties (e.g. providing personal taxation advice for a council member or officer or a close relative of any of those). The appointed auditors were Moore Stephens (Leicester & Peterborough branches). The Twinning Association had requested an increase in GMC's contributions for the years 2002 to 2005. However, the increase requested breached the previously agreed 3:1 ratio and it was recommended that the new contribution should be £1300 per year. APPROVED. The request for a linguistic award for individuals was not recommended by the WP but an increase in the contribution covering Youth Activities from £1200 to £1400 was recommended. APPROVED. The Town Hall lease was due to be renewed within the next year and needed reviewing. It was recommended that a small WP be set up to action the review. AGREED. Following a massive electrical surge at Judith's Field, the alarm panel had been destroyed. It was recommended that up to £295 be agreed for a new panel for the alarm system and a surge protection device. APPROVED. It was recommended that the outgoing Town Clerk should be paid an additional ½ month salary in appreciation of the advice that he had offered to continue to give to the new Town Clerk. APPROVED.

Recreation and Amenities. The WP had not met. Cllr SPENCER would call one in the near future.

Environment. The WP met on 15th April 2002. Following the correspondence concerning the need to replace the existing town signs on the B 1043 from Dr Middlemiss, a number of options were considered. It was recommended that two new twinning signs should be purchased to a maximum price of £3000. Prior to the Town Council meeting a quotation was received for £1385 each for the signs, including posts and fittings. It also included for any consultation or design input. APPROVED. The WP considered a letter from the house manager of The Chestnuts, West Street concerning the need for signs warning motorists of the presence of elderly residents. The Town Clerk was to write to CCC supporting the requests. Concern about the chestnut trees planted close to allotment holders' plots had been resolved amicably with the Allotment Association and the Town Clerk was to write to the Association to confirm the points agreed between themselves and Cllr SURSHAM. It was suggested that the Town Clerk should approach Fergusons for a quotation to include the spraying of herbicide to the base of the chestnut trees alongside the allotments and the 5 new lime trees along The Avenue. The Town Council was asked to consider whether, in the light

of the successful Spring Clean campaign, it might be possible to hold a similar event later in the year in, say, September. A decision was deferred.

Property. Cllr SURSHAM advised the Council that work on the Church gates, walls and railings had begun and that the Police were keeping a watchful eye on the area. He also reported that he had approached Garth Hurdon for advice on how best to tackle the problem of the central heating system in QES. Cllr SURSHAM recommended that Mr Hurdon be invited to prepare a scheme of work. The scheme of work would cost some £4000 and the initial estimate for the work to be carried out was of the order of £30000. The Town Council was concerned at the possible cost and asked Cllr SURSHAM to investigate alternatives. Because QES was a Listed Building, the Town Clerk was to write to the Conservation Officer to ascertain what could and could not be done. He was also to contact the Energy Information Centre in Newmarket for advice.

Cemetery. The WP met on 15th April 2002. All the books and ledgers had been received from HDC. Entries had been transcribed into alphabetical order into the new register. It was proposed that a party of councillors would clear the grave areas on the evening of 1st May 2002 from 6:30pm. The Town Clerk requested approval for the expenditure of up to £40.00 for the purchase of 20 plastic bins to be used for the storage of adornments and other paraphernalia to be removed from the graves in the Cemetery. APPROVED.

Judith's Field. Cllr GOFF explained that all the work required to refurbish JF had been put out to tender. He intended to call a WP meeting on 7th May 2002 at 8:00pm to review charges for the hire of the premises.

Other Representative Groups.

CALC/NALC There was no CALC/NALC report.

Twinning Association The Mayor reported that the Wertheim Hornblowers would be playing during the 9:45am All-age Eucharist on Sunday 28th April 2002 at St Mary's Church. After coffee in the Church Hall they would be lunching in the "Black Bull".

02/028 SELECTION OF THE TOWN MAYOR FOR 2002/2003

Prior to the meeting, no nominations had been received for the position of Town Mayor. Subsequently, Cllr Mrs LOOKER indicated that she would be willing to serve. There was a unanimous vote in favour and Mrs LOOKER was duly selected.

02/029 SELECTION OF THE DEPUTY TOWN MAYOR FOR 2002/2003

There had been no nominations for the position of Deputy Town Mayor prior to the meeting but Cllr SPENCER indicated that he would be willing to serve. He received a unanimous vote in favour and was, therefore, duly selected.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Cllr BROWN advised the meeting that notices at both the lock and on the Causeway needed resiting. The Town Clerk was to notify the Environment Agency.

Cllr COHEN asked if the use of cycle tracks, where provided, was compulsory. The Town Clerk was to consult with the Community Police for advice.

Cllr Vane Percy expressed concern about the storm-damaged trees in the Recreation area. Cllr SURSHAM was to provide the Town Clerk with the details of tree contractors. Town Clerk's Note: Cllr SURSHAM provided details on 19th April 2002.

The Town Clerk asked for approval for the expenditure of up to £160 for the purchase of 500 Kalamazoo Minute sheets. APPROVED.

THE NEXT COUNCIL MEETING WILL BE HELD ON 16 MAY 2002.

The meeting ended 9:30 pm Town Mayor