

# **GODMANCHESTER TOWN COUNCIL MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD IN THE GODMANCHESTER TOWN HALL ON THURSDAY 15 AUGUST 2002**

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

**APOLOGIES:** Councillors: D T ASHWORTH, M COHEN, Mrs B MOORE, G WILSON

**ABSENT:** Councillor Mrs P TYLER

**PRESENT:** There were 6 members of the public present.

## **TOWN MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Town Mayor reported that she had represented the Town on 2 occasions since the last meeting, one of which had been attendance at the Huntingdon Carnival.

Cllr Mrs Hull arrived at 7.32pm

The Deputy Mayor reported that he had not represented the Town since the last meeting.

Cllr Vane Percy arrived at 7.33pm

The MAYOR reminded all councillors that this years Civic Service would be held on Sunday 15 September 2002.

## **02/054 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING**

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 18 July 2002 were APPROVED and signed as a complete and accurate record.

## **02/055 MATTERS ARISING**

The Outstanding Actions List dated 15 August 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).

00/074 Cemetery. The removal of inappropriate objects from grave spaces was due to be complete before re-turfing took place in September. A team of Town Council members was to form to carry out this task. The Town Clerk was to liaise with Fergusons to ensure that re-turfing took place as soon as possible after the removal of the objects. The Cemetery WP was to meet to agree a date for these actions.

02/053 Environment. A response was still awaited from HDC on costing details related to Small Scale Environmental Improvements involving Church Place. This matter was discussed under WP reports.

Cllr KYNOCH expressed his concern that in the Inspector's Report on the Huntingdon Local Plan Alteration, Godmanchester had been referred to as a Market Town. He wished to object to that and the Town Clerk was asked to acquire the relevant form for completion by Cllr KYNOCH. Cllr BROWN volunteered to assist in compilation of the objection. APPROVED. The Town Clerk reminded both councillors that the deadline for such submissions was 22 August 2002.

The MAYOR wished to record her thanks to Cllrs WILSON and COMBEN for their sterling efforts in producing a comprehensive and well thought out formal objection to the Local Plan Alteration which had been submitted that day to HDC.

## **02/056 CORRESPONDENCE**

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

CCC had referred the matter of the wooden barrier outside the Town cemetery to HDC. The Town Clerk was to hasten HDC for the repair to be carried out.

The DEPUTY MAYOR wondered whether the Huntingdon Housing Partnership Street Warden scheme could be extended to include such areas as Judith's Field and volunteered to investigate further, especially in the light of the recent spate of vandalism at Judith's Field.

Following the e-mail from SITA concerning the installation of a commemorative plaque on the rebuilt church walls, there was much discussion which resulted in the RECOMMENDATION that any plaque should be affixed to the metalwork, once that was completed. Further discussion resulted in the suggestion that the words "Refurbished 2002" be engraved in the stonework. The matter was deferred to the next Property WP meeting.

Referring to the correspondence from HDC concerning the future development of air transport in the UK, it was noted that a response was required by 30 October 2002. As this was potentially an emotive subject it was deferred until the next Environment WP meeting.

In their reply to the letter from the Town Clerk concerning the loose headstones in the cemetery, HDC had averred that inspection work had not been part of their remit. The Town Council was of the opinion that that could not have been the case and instructed the Town Clerk to write to the Health & Safety Executive to determine liability. Additionally the Town Clerk was to pass any reply to HDC who were the successors in title in regard to the administration of the cemetery. The Cemetery WP was to investigate, with other cemeteries to determine whether there were published specifications for the erection of headstones and to ascertain their understanding of their liability under Health & Safety regulations.

Referring to the letter from the Godmanchester Community Association requesting funding for Picnic in the Park 2003, the MAYOR suggested that this be discussed at the next Finance WP meeting.

## **02/057 ACCOUNTS**

The accounts set out in Appendix B were APPROVED. The Town Clerk pointed out that the sum of £9.75 payable to Mr Gadenne was a refund brought about by a double booking in QES.

During discussion of the accounts, it was suggested that the Town Clerk ensured that the lifebuoys being purchased to replace those that were missing were permanently marked to identify them as belonging to Godmanchester Town Council.

Whilst not strictly an accounting matter, the Town Clerk reported that Cllr NORRIS had approached the Huntingdon Tourist Information Centre (TIC) to ascertain whether they would be willing to sell copies of the Godmanchester Town Trail on behalf of the Town council. The TIC had indicated a willingness but asked for some recompense for so doing. The Town Trail sells for £0.50. The Town Clerk suggested that a 10% discount could be offered to the TIC, i.e. £0.05 per copy. The Town Clerk was to send an initial supply of 100 copies. APPROVED.

## **02/058 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.

## **02/059 DISCUSSION OF BEARSCROFT LANE FOOTBALL FACILITIES**

Following the receipt of a letter from the Godmanchester Football & Sports Association Trust, the trustees, Mr M Westcott Rudd and Mr K Gabb had been invited to attend this meeting. The Mayor declared a personal and prejudicial interest in this agenda item; the Deputy Mayor declared a personal interest. For this item only, Cllr NORRIS took the chair and the Mayor left the meeting.

Cllr NORRIS explained the reasons for this discussion. Notwithstanding previous allegations referred to in a letter received from the Godmanchester Football & Sports Association Trust, there were no derogatory comments about the Trust recorded anywhere in the minutes. There was no ill feeling nor meaning to harm the image of the Trust. As far as he understood matters, there were still 2 conditions to be fulfilled by the Trust, namely, landscaping and lighting. Cllr NORRIS asked the Trustees what their intentions were.

Mr Westcott Rudd confirmed that the Trust had signed a 99-year lease for a peppercorn rent; therefore the Trust was responsible for fulfilling all outstanding planning conditions. Landscaping would take place to preserve the privacy of the neighbouring farmer. This would include maintenance of the boundary hedge. The Trust had undertaken to complete this work in October. Mr Westcott Rudd informed the meeting that the height of the hedge was not sufficient to stop balls or people crossing and it was the intention to incorporate an environmentally friendly fence to provide greater security to both properties. He went on to say that the lighting had been modified and tested. The lux spillage condition still had to be fulfilled. The Trust was conscious of its responsibility. In response to Mr Westcott Rudd, the neighbouring farmer, Mr Whitehill said that when the lights had been tested they had tripped all his switches and that there was a possibility that the wrong type of meters had been installed. Mr Whitehill went on to say that there had been a bund in the original plan and that hedges had been a condition included in the 1997/98 agreement. The DEPUTY MAYOR intimated that the bunding arrangements had been made by HDC with the developers (Westbury). Mr Westcott Rudd advised that HDC had not replied to the Trust on this matter but that the Trust would action this requirement in October.

Cllr NORRIS then invited questions from members of the Town Council. Cllr BROWN asked whether road access to the site was still an issue. Mr Westcott Rudd advised that the Trust was not satisfied with the scheme but was pursuing the Highways Authority for a timetable. Cllr BROWN asked about the height of the proposed fence and was advised by Mr Gabb that initially it would be 1 metre but the Trust was awaiting a decision on extending it by an additional 2 metres.

Cllr NORRIS thanked all parties for attending the meeting and the MAYOR resumed the chair.

## **02/060 WORKING PARTY (WP) REPORTS**

**Finance.** The Finance WP had not met since the last Town Council meeting.

**Environment.** The WP had met on 5 August 2002. Referring to the outstanding matter, 02/053, Cllr NORRIS reported that he had hastened HDC and had been informed that the matter was being attended to. A reply would be forthcoming shortly and in any event before the next Town Council meeting.

Reporting on the Parish Planting scheme, Cllr NORRIS stated that many feasible locations were already “wooded”. In the churchyard, the poplars had been removed. It was suggested that they should be replaced by a type of flowering cherry and the advice of Cllr SURSHAM would be sought. Another possible site was the vicarage garden. The Town Council gave APPROVAL in principle for these locations.

HDC had advised of a contract for Advertising Bus Shelters; the shelters to be constructed in Cambridge Road. The Town Council was asked to consider other possible locations and Old Court Hall and Post Street outside Mill Yard car park were suggested. It was DECIDED that a decision on the location of other shelters would be deferred until the full impact of those to be constructed in Cambridge Road had been evaluated.

Refurbishment of the town signs had been pursued; following the estimate last month from Mr Bernasconi, Smith of Derby and Malcolm Lane & Co had been invited to quote for the work. The Town Clerk also notified the Town Council that he had had a verbal proposal from Dr Middlemiss, who had offered to carry out the work on the West Street sign for only the cost of the paint, provided the Town Council could assist in its removal and re-installation. The Town Council ACCEPTED this offer. In the meantime, the Town Clerk was to approach HDC seeking advice on the removal of the sign attached to Riverside Mill.

In his submission to the Parish Paths Partnership annual report, Cllr NORRIS had announced that the footpath at Monks Pit was now open. However, events had overtaken that announcement; the path was not open and there was to be a further Public Enquiry.

Cllr COMBEN suggested that the Town Clerk should write to HDC to hasten action on the survey produced by Cllr GOFF on the street furniture in Godmanchester. This was submitted to HDC in January 2002.

Cllr COMBEN informed the meeting that there had been a number of complaints about the close board fencing erected along the Ouse Valley Way, close to Monks Pit. The Town

Council instructed the Town Clerk to approach the HDC Enforcement Officer to ascertain the legitimacy of this fencing.

**Property.** The WP had not met. Item 02/062 was discussed at this juncture. Following the failure of the heating and the gas supply to Queen Elisabeth School, invitations had been invited for the various works. The Town Clerk had prepared a spreadsheet summarising the tenders and after much discussion, it was AGREED that Simon O'Connor be invited to carry out the work on heating, plumbing and reinstating the gas supply.

**Judith's Field.** Cllr GOFF presented a comprehensive report on progress on work being carried out at Judith's Field. He recommended that all the windows that had been vandalised be replaced with polycarbonate instead of glass. This would cost approximately 30% more than glass but was less likely to suffer from vandalism. This was APPROVED by the Town Council. Turning to the security aspects, Cllr GOFF proposed that, instead of roller shutters or grilles to protect all vulnerable areas preventing access to the veranda and doorways, wrought iron gates and grilles be installed. He had received various estimates for this work and recommended that that from B E Welding & Fabrication for £1948.00, plus £200.00 for the door frame be accepted. APPROVED. There was also a requirement to replace soffit boards, roof tiles and down pipes. Again, he had received a number of estimates and recommended that the estimate from Huntingdon Specialist Coatings for £965.00 be accepted. The Town Council ACCEPTED this estimate.

Cllr GOFF informed the meeting that HDC had agreed to build a dirt trail for the skateboard users for just £100.00. All that was required was a design; he had asked the children what they wanted. He recommended that this sum be approved and that the Town Council proceed with the project. APPROVED.

As much of the expenditure was incurred as a result of vandalism, the Town Council asked the Town Clerk to enquire of Huntingdon Town Council for their general opinion on claiming against insurance for these costs.

Cllr GOFF informed the Town Council that ACRE was planning to hold a one day conference on Village Halls and how to make them a successful multi-purpose facility, attract more funding and increase income. He suggested that, as Judith's Field would soon be up and running again, it would be appropriate for him to attend. The cost would be £12.00. The Town Council APPROVED this sum for Cllr GOFF to attend.

No dates were proposed for the next round of WP meetings but the Planning WP would meet as usual, one week prior to the Council Meeting, on Thursday 12 September 2002.

Cllr Vane Percy left the meeting at 10.00pm

## **02/061 RATIFICATION OF MONIES COMMITTED UNDER ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

The Town Clerk explained that, following discussions with his predecessor, he had discovered that the voting of expenditure under "Any Other Business" was not allowed. He therefore requested that the following items, which had previously voted on under that category be formally ratified:

Minutes dated 18 April 2002 - £160.00 for the purchase of Kalamazoo Minute Sheets.

Minutes dated 16 May 2002 - £400.00 additional Mayoral Purse; £589.00 plus VAT to Ashley & Foster for the re-fixing of headstones in the Cemetery.

Minutes dated 20 June 2002 - £20.00 per month increase as a result of an increase in hours worked by the Town Clerk's Assistant.

The Town Clerk reminded the Council that all the above expenditure had been approved previously. APPROVED.

**02/062 QUEEN ELIZABETH SCHOOL. Discussion under this item was taken during the Property WP report.**

**ANY OTHER BUSINESS.** The Town Clerk advised members of the Town Council that he would be on holiday for the period 24 August to 8 September inclusive. His assistant, Mrs Hakimi, would be running the Town Office in his absence.

The DEPUTY MAYOR asked for ideas for an appropriate gift to be presented when representing Godmanchester at the European Festival of Youth to be given to the Mayor of Salon. All Councillors were asked to think of ideas and to discuss at the next meeting, which would be held approximately one week before the festival.

The DEPUTY MAYOR had attended a recent Godmanchester Community Association meeting at which it had been suggested that there should be closer links with local businesses. They needed to be made to feel that they were all part of the local community. After some discussion it was proposed that the MAYOR/DEPUTY MAYOR should write to local businesses suggesting closer links. APPROVED.

Cllr Mrs HULL informed the Town Council that she had had outline agreement from "Natural High" to conduct a Graffiti Art Project workshop. The skills imparted at the workshop would eventually be applied at the skatepark in Judith's Field. The MAYOR said that she would fund this project from the mayoral purse.

Cllr Comben left the meeting at 11.03pm

**THE NEXT COUNCIL MEETING WILL BE HELD ON 19 SEPTEMBER 2002.**

The meeting ended 1105 pm Town Mayor