

GODMANCHESTER TOWN COUNCIL MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD IN THE GODMANCHESTER TOWN HALL ON THURSDAY 17 OCTOBER 2002

PRESENT: Councillor Mrs A LOOKER Town Mayor
Councillors D T ASHWORTH, D BROWN, M COHEN, D COMBEN, Mrs H HULL, E KYNOCH, R NORRIS, S SPENCER, A SURSHAM, C VANE PERCY and G WILSON
Town Clerk: A J WELTON

APOLOGIES: Councillors A GOFF, Mrs B MOORE

ABSENT: Councillor Mrs P TYLER

PRESENT: There were no members of the public present.

TOWN MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Town Mayor indicated that she had represented the Town on 5 occasions since the last meeting and in the previous month, on 4 occasions. The Deputy Mayor had represented the Town at the European Festival of Youth in the twin town of Salon-en-Provence.

The Town Mayor reminded all councillors that there would be a service of Remembrance on Sunday 10 November 2002 and hoped that all would attend. Details would be sent to all by the Town Clerk.

Similarly, celebration of 5 November 2002, with the traditional firework display, would take place at Judith's Field and the Town Mayor asked for the support of as many councillors as possible at this event.

Cllr SURSHAM arrived at 7.35pm.

02/070 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 19 September 2002 were APPROVED and signed as a complete and accurate record.

02/071 MATTERS ARISING

The Outstanding Actions List dated 17 October 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. Cllr COHEN reported that the inappropriate objects on the grave spaces had now been removed thus enabling the contractor to begin the work of levelling and re-turfing.

00/086 Environment. Cllr SURSHAM reported that the railings and gates were now in position but there were a few minor actions needed to finish the job completely. It was

planned to have an official opening and this was provisionally planned for the 3rd week in November, when all interested parties would be invited to attend a short ceremony.

02/009 Environment. Cllr NORRIS advised that the project to renew the Town Signs to reflect the Twinning association with the 3 European twin towns was still awaiting the relevant insignia. Cllr SPENCER reported that he had asked the Mayor of Salon whilst representing Godmanchester at the Festival of European Youth event in Salon for a copy and that he had written since his return to remind them.

02/072 ALCONBURY AIRFIELD PROPOSAL

Cllr ASHWORTH was invited to speak about the proposed conversion of the Alconbury Airfield into a commercial freight and passenger facility. He outlined the information he had gleaned both from his attendance at the presentation by the Department of Transport and from the information he had acquired elsewhere. He presented a number of questions which needed answers and it was proposed that a temporary Working Party (WP) be set up to discuss views. The WP would be held on two dates: Thursday 24 October at 7.30pm and Thursday 31 October at 8.00pm, both in the QES. Cllrs ASHWORTH, KYNOCH, LOOKER, NORRIS, SURSHAM and VANE PERCY would be members of the WP. Input from other members of the Town Council was also invited.

Cllr SPENCER undertook to provide copies of the DoT questionnaires.

02/073 CORRESPONDENCE

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

Cllr COMBEN arrived at 8.20pm.

The 3 quotations received for the repair/replacement of the Christmas lighting currently on the QES and Town Hall buildings were discussed. The subject was emotive and it was DECIDED that Cllr VANE PERCY should investigate alternative methods of providing decorations/illuminations for the festive season. In the meantime it was DECIDED that no further action would be taken.

There had been an observation from the WEA that the curtains in QES did not meet, they were also in need of cleaning. After some discussion it was AGREED that, now that the central heating had been refurbished, consideration should be given to interior decoration of the building, to include cleaning/replacement of the curtains. It was mooted that the now defunct meetings between the Town Council and the Friends of QES should be resurrected. There was general agreement but no firm decision was taken.

The MAYOR briefed the members of the Council on the outcome of the objections placed before the Licensing Magistrates concerning the granting of a justices off-licence to the Total Convenience Store at the Cardinal Way Industrial estate. Essentially, the objections put forward by the Town Council were not accepted and a licence was granted. The MAYOR undertook to pursue the matter further.

02/074 ACCOUNTS

The accounts set out in Appendix B were APPROVED.

02/075 PLANNING APPLICATIONS AND CORRESPONDENCE

Cllr Mrs HULL arrived at 8.55pm

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

There was to be a training seminar on the basic operation of planning systems with particular reference to dealing with planning applications to be held on Wednesday 23 October in Pathfinder House. Cllrs BROWN and KYNOCH undertook to attend.

The Town Clerk was instructed to try to obtain a copy of the HDC Planning Policy Manager's report on the Local Plan Alteration Report to be discussed at the Development Control Panel on Monday 21 October 2002.

The Town Clerk was instructed to write to all District Councillors in advance of the Development Control Panel meeting on 21 October 2002 to remind them of the stance taken by Godmanchester Town Council.

The MAYOR explained that she could not now attend the Examination in Public of the Cambridgeshire Deposit Draft Structure Plan, due to be held on 31 October 2002, as she had to declare a personal interest and Cllr WILSON could not now attend because his recent movement to a new position precluded his input. Cllr KYNOCH volunteered to represent the Town Council in these matters.

Regional Planning Guidance 14 (RPG14) Seminar for the East of England was due to take place on Monday 28 October from 7.00pm to 9.00pm in the Council Chamber, Pathfinder House. Cllrs BROWN, COHEN and KYNOCH indicated that they would attend.

Discussion then took place concerning the alterations to the dwelling at 55 Post Street Godmanchester. At the WP meeting observations were made: The District Council Conservation Officer had visited the site and carried out a close inspection of the work. It was confirmed that the materials used were of an acceptable quality. The style of the replacement dormer windows and associated re-designed roof was sympathetic to the style of the house and the adjacent street scene. The Town Council, whilst accepting that formal planning consent should have been obtained prior to the start of work, considered that the repairs and revised roof section above each dormer window did not detract from the period dwelling. In this particular case the Town Council would not object to the completion of the work without having had sight of a planning application. However, the Town Clerk was to write to HDC deploring this practice and seeking confirmation that the contractor had been appropriately chastised and had been asked to pay the appropriate planning fees.

Cllr VANE PERCY departed at 9.36pm.

02/076 WORKING PARTY (WP) REPORTS

Finance. The Finance WP had not met since the previous Town Council meeting. It was proposed to hold the next WP meeting on 13 November 2002 at 8.00pm at 4 Crowhill and all Cllrs were invited to attend.

Environment. There was to have been a WP meeting held at 17 Porch Close on 7 October 2002 at 8.00pm but nobody attended.

Discussing the proposal by HDC for Small Scale Environmental Improvements in Church Place, the general feeling was of disappointment that there had been a lack of consultation prior to having been presented with the plan. It was suggested that there should be early discussion of any future plans. This matter had been deferred from the previous Town Council meeting and now required a decision if the project money being proposed by HDC was not to be lost. The Town Clerk had been advised verbally that the Town Council would be expected to contribute towards the total cost of £12000 and it was suggested that £3000 would be an appropriate contribution. The Town Council APPROVED a sum of 25% of the total cost with a maximum contribution of £3000.

Deputy Mayor, Cllr SPENCER departed at 9.58pm.

Smith of Derby had advised that the linkages and connecting rods in the Parish Church clock were wearing and that they should be repaired soon. Their estimated cost was £660.00 plus VAT. The Town Council APPROVED that expenditure on repairs.

Cllr NORRIS advised that Dr Middlemiss had completed the refurbishment of the road sign at the entrance to West Street and Cllr NORRIS agreed to re-erect it. However, the sign located on the Riverside Mill was more problematical. The Town Council would have to provide traffic lights, enforce traffic restrictions, hire various handling aids and carry out the work, preferably on a Sunday. The state of the sign was not so bad as to warrant such disruption or expenditure and the Town Council AGREED not to pursue this matter any further.

The "Frog" litterbin in Jubilee Park had been burnt and needed replacement. Cllr NORRIS proposed to replace it with a more robust version at a cost of £241.00 plus VAT. This was APPROVED.

In discussing the Definitive Map Modification Order 2002 (Public Footpath No 15 Godmanchester) relating to Monks Pit, the Town Clerk was instructed to inform the Planning Inspectorate that the Town Council was, indeed, prepared to present the case for the Order at the Inquiry to be held at 10.00am on Tuesday 4 February 2003 in the QES. The Town Clerk was also instructed to contact all the original plaintiffs to ask them to be present and to ascertain whether they would be prepared to state their cases.

It had been noted that a barrier had been erected around the Old Mill sluice. It appeared that there were repairs being carried out but no advice had been received from the Environment Agency as to the nature or extent of those repairs.

Town Clerk's Note: The Environment Agency telephoned the Town Office on Friday 18 October 2002 to advise that a tree had been removed and the walls surrounding the sluice were beginning to crumble. It was proposed to carry out remedial work at this stage but the

engineer could not confirm, at this stage, whether this would lead to the more intensive work that had been promised to begin in 2003.

The next Environment WP would be held on 12 November 2002 at 8.00pm in the QES.

Property.

Cllr SURSHAM advised that he had had 2 quotations for the manufacture of the commemorative plaque that was to be installed on the church gates. He explained that the bronze effect version was really only appropriate for installation inside a building whilst the recommended version would stand the test of time more readily. The cost of the preferred version would be £531.00 plus VAT and this sum was APPROVED.

Cllr SURSHAM departed at 10.17pm.

Judith's Field.

The Judith's Field WP had not met since the last Town Council meeting.

Cemetery.

Cllr COHEN referred to the correspondence received from CALC concerning the Association of Burial Authorities and suggested that membership of such an organisation would be of benefit to the Town Council as it provided a help line on a variety of matters pertinent to the management of cemeteries. The annual cost of membership was £20.00 and was due on 1 January 2003. The Town Council APPROVED the expenditure of £20.00 per annum for membership of this Association.

Cllr COMBEN undertook to hold a meeting at 26 Earning Street on Sunday 20 October 2002 at 10.00am to discuss the Garden of Remembrance.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS.

The Town Clerk advised members of the Council that PC Carter, the Community Policeman, had indicated that he hoped to make a brief presentation on the current state of vandalism and petty crime at the next Town Council meeting, in November. This was to replace the item from the September meeting that had been postponed due to other commitments.

The Town Clerk also advised members that the previously scheduled talk by Huntingdon Primary Care Trust due to be made at this meeting had been re-scheduled to the January 2003 meeting.

Cllr Mrs HULL told the meeting that she had been advised that Outreach funding for Youth Centre work had been received and the advisors would discuss the possible use of those funds soon.

Cllr Mrs HULL advised the meeting that she had recently attended a seminar on the subject of flooding and flood defences. She said that there would be limited help available from other agencies in the event of a major flood and that small organisations such as the Town Council would be able only to count on self-help. Cllr Mrs HULL undertook to précis the information

she had to present at a newly created WP to be held on 18 November 2002 at 8.00pm in QES.
The WP would consist of Cllrs Mrs HULL, BROWN, KYNOCH and NORRIS.

Cllr COMBEN departed at 10.36pm.

THE NEXT COUNCIL MEETING WILL BE HELD ON 21 NOVEMBER 2002.

The meeting ended 10.40 pm Town Mayor