

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD IN THE GODMANCHESTER TOWN HALL
ON THURSDAY 16 JUNE 2005**

PRESENT: H R BUTCHER, Town Mayor, M COHEN Deputy Town Mayor
Councillors: D BROWN, J COXHEAD, A GOFF, L HOLGATE, C R HYAMS
Town Clerk: A J WELTON

APOLOGIES: Cllrs: W D BUTTERWORTH, Mrs C A GODLEY, E KYNOCH,
Mrs A M LOOKER, Mrs B MOORE, Mrs E TREHARNE-JONES, C VANE PERCY

ABSENT: Cllr Mrs H HULL

There were 2 members of the public present.

PRESENTATION:

Mrs Sandra Attewell of the Huntingdon Volunteer Bureau gave a brief presentation on the activities of the bureau. She explained that it was a charity established to promote volunteering within the community. The bureau had a coordinating role, liaising with organizations that needed volunteers. The bureau also tried to enable projects to get underway. For example, there was a need to provide gardening facilities and currently the organization was tending 62 gardens for the elderly.

There was a Social Car Scheme which provided transport to those who could not use public transport and made journeys to doctors, dentists, opticians but did not provide transport for such things as hospital appointments.

The bureau also arranged holiday schemes for needy families and operated the visitor centre at HMP Littlehay. As the volunteer coordinator, Mrs Attewell was the only salaried member of the bureau and the bureau relied heavily on outside financial donations. The Town Clerk advised Mrs Attewell of the S137 grant scheme and suggested that she should approach the Town Council for a grant. The Town Council would consider such an application in December when the next round of S137 grants would be made.

PRESENTATION:

Mr Graham Campbell of Campbell Associates gave a short explanation of the various options for providing Disabled Access to the Town Hall as detailed in the plans he had recently submitted to the Town Council for consideration. He indicated that, because the Town Hall was a listed building, much would depend on the expertise of the HDC Conservation Officer. There was no doubt that the steps at the entrance had to be kept, even if they were raised and levelled. The preferred options were numbers 1 and 7 (1:15 and 1:20 gradient respectively) but it had to be accepted that there would be some loss of car parking facilities.

Mr Campbell advised that the next stage would be to apply for Listed Building Consent and Full planning application.

When questioned about the possibility of securing grants to offset the total cost, Mr Campbell suggested that an approach should be made to HDC. Cllr Brown asked whether an approach

to the likes of English Heritage would be appropriate. Mr Campbell indicated that he would take some initial soundings and would also try to obtain a ballpark estimate of like costs.

TOWN MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS.

The MAYOR expressed his disappointment at the low level of attendance by Cllrs at this meeting. He reminded those present and, through the medium of these minutes, those who were absent for whatever reason, that it was common courtesy for members to notify their reasons for absence in advance to the Town Clerk.

The MAYOR advised that he had represented the Town on 6 occasions since the last meeting. The DEPUTY MAYOR had represented the Town on 1 occasion since the previous meeting.

The MAYOR advised that he had contacted all Chairs of the various Working Parties to ascertain whether they were willing to continue in post. He said that he would retain the Environment portfolio for the time being. Cllr BUTTERWORTH had undertaken to continue with the A14 and would take on Property, in conjunction with Cllr VANE PERCY. Cllr COHEN, in addition to retaining the Cemetery would also be the point of contact on matters related to the Huntingdon Volunteer Bureau. Cllr COXHEAD undertook to become involved with Youth matters along with Cllrs Mrs HULL and Mrs LOOKER. Cllr Mrs GODLEY was also a District Councillor. Cllr GOFF retained the Judith's Field portfolio. Cllr HOLGATE would continue with the Planning portfolio. Cllr Mrs HULL would continue as a governor of the Community Primary School, Flood Defences and the Police Consultation Group. Cllr HYAMS was also both a District and County Councillor. Cllr KYNOCH would continue with his membership of the CALC/NALC and CABs. Cllr Mrs LOOKER would represent the Council at Twinning. Cllr Mrs MOORE would continue as Chair of the Finance WP. Cllr Mrs TREHARNE-JONES would continue to chair the H&S WP for the time being. Cllr VANE PERCY would continue with Tourism.

05/039 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING.

The Minutes of the meeting held on 19 May 2005 were APPROVED and signed as a complete and accurate record.

05/040 MATTERS ARISING.

The Outstanding Actions List, dated 21 April 2005 was reviewed.

05/041 S137 GRANTS: To consider the various S137 requests:

Parish Church - £1200 APPROVED

Huntingdonshire District Citizens Advice Bureaux - £250 APPROVED

Godmanchester Baptist Church Holiday Club - £400 APPROVED

St Anne's' C of E Primary School – PSFA - £400 APPROVED

St Mary's 0-5 Group - £400 APPROVED

Godmanchester Community Primary School - £110 APPROVED

Alzheimer's Society – No grant made

Riverside Rangers FC - £500 APPROVED

Jigsaw Nursery - £400 APPROVED

Macmillan Cancer Relief – No grant made
Godmanchester Kid's Club - £1000 APPROVED.

The Town Clerk was to write to the applicants to advise them of the outcome of their requests for financial assistance.

05/042 CORRESPONDENCE.

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

Referring to the CALC training session for new Cllrs or those who felt in need of a refresher, the MAYOR recommended that as many Cllrs as possible should attend the course being held in St Ives on 29 October 2005 and asked those who were interested to pass their names to the Town Clerk, who would send off the application form in due course.

The CCC letter concerning the A14 Ellington to Fen Ditton consultation was discussed. The MAYOR said that his view and that of the previous Mayor was that the preferred option was Option 1; to create a 6-lane highway to the south of the Wood Green Animal Shelter, to de-trunk the existing A14 and to dismantle the dangerous flyover at Huntingdon Railway Station. The assembled members of the Town Council AGREED with that view and the Town Clerk was to ensure that that view was communicated to CCC by the deadline date of 30 June 2005. Cllr HYAMS advised that the Godmanchester view was the same as that of both HDC and CCC.

In discussing the letter from BT concerning the removal of two of the three public telephone kiosks in Godmanchester, it was DECIDED that the kiosk at Roman Way could go but the one opposite the 1-Stop shop should be retained. The reason for this was that there was a number of care homes in the close vicinity and the elderly were less likely to have mobile telephones. Additionally, the centre of Godmanchester was a tourist attraction, especially in the summer months and, given the proximity to the water, the retention of a public telephone kiosk at that location was highly desirable. The Town Clerk was to respond to BT.

05/043 ACCOUNTS.

The accounts set out in Appendix B were APPROVED.

05/044 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.

05/045 DISTRICT COUNCIL REPORTS.

Cllr HYAMS advised that he had attended a useful and informative Police seminar about PCSOs. He said that the government target for PCSOs in the UK was 25000. In Huntingdonshire there was an establishment of 22 with 20 of those posts filled. Currently HDC paid for 14 of those.

Referring to a set of minutes he had received from the Transport Area Joint Committee, Cllr HYAMS reported that he would be meeting with Emma Murden to discuss the East Chadley Lane cycleway.

Traffic calming had been installed in Godmanchester but, to date, the flashing amber lights at start of the schools safety zones were not yet in operation. Similarly, the interactive signs were not yet working. The MAYOR suggested that it would be appropriate to carry out an in depth monitoring of the effectiveness of the scheme, once it had been in operation for 6 months.

05/046 WORKING PARTY (WP) REPORTS.

Cemetery. There was nothing to report other than the proposed start date for the resurfacing of the Cemetery car park was 17 June 2005.

Environment. The MAYOR, in his capacity as chair of the WP advised that there was now a bus shelter in Tudor Road.

The footings for the replacement benches on The Avenue had been completed and, once notified that they had cured, the Town Clerk would order the benches to be delivered to Ashley & Foster for installation.

A quotation had been received from Fergusons for either re-seeding or re-turfing the play area at Devana Close. After some discussion it was decided to defer any decision until after the new play equipment had been installed by Wicksteed.

The quotation for the play equipment from Wicksteed amounted to £5806 including installation. APPROVED. A further quotation for signage at the play area amounted to £955 but it was DECIDED not to proceed.

A quotation of £489 had been received from Ashley & Foster for the repair of the seating around the tree near the War Memorial. APPROVED.

Having received a quotation for the pruning of the willow trees on Coronation Walk from another contractor who had failed to elaborate, when asked, on what was being carried out for the money quoted, it had been decided to seek a second quotation. Willow Tree Services had surveyed the trees and offered two options: to deadwood the 6 trees, removing all hung up branches plus any dangerous or hazardous limbs or to reduce all trees by 30%. This would be the more suitable option as it would remove weight from the exterior of the limbs. It would also pull back the branches hanging over the river. The cost of option 1 would be £875 whilst the cost of option 2 would be £2120. After some discussion it was DECIDED that the Town clerk was to contact Willow Tree Services and ask them to implement option 2.

Finance. There had not been a WP meeting. The Town Clerk advised that work on the Clerk's Terms of Reference was still on going.

The Town Clerk advised the meeting that he had had an application for the position of caretaker for the QES halls. A Mr Keith Walters had been interviewed and, having had the opportunity to read the detailed job description, he had asked to be considered for the post. The Town Clerk had received a satisfactory reference from Mr Walters' previous employer

and asked approval to offer the post to Mr Walters on a 6-month probation, starting on 4 July 2005. APPROVED.

Flood Defences. There was no report as Cllr Mrs HULL was not present.

Health & Safety. In the absence of Cllr Mrs TREHARNE-JONES, the Town Clerk advised that he had sought quotations to safety electrical checks of QES. It was DECIDED to accept the quotation from Moore Electrical and the Town Clerk was to write accepting their quotation.

Judith's Field. Cllr GOFF reported that the skate ramps had been painted at last, thanks to pressure brought to bear by Cllr HYAMS. However, there were still holes in the surfaces and it was understood that HDC has obtained an estimate for the repair.

The dusk to dawn sensor had been repaired yet again. The Town Clerk had investigated resiting the sensor where it could not easily be damaged and had had an estimate of £135.95 including VAT to resite it in the apex of one of the end walls of the building. APPROVED.

The Town Clerk was to write to Ashley & Foster to ask them to repair the hole in the soffit on the field side of the building.

There was graffiti on the walls of the building and Cllr GOFF agreed to contact HDC to endeavour to get it removed.

The situation regarding the security cameras was still in limbo.

Other Representative Groups/Twinning/Youth Focus Group.

There were no reports from other groups.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS.

The Town Clerk advised that he would be on leave from 19 June until 26 June inclusive.

Cllr COHEN suggested that it would be appropriate to record the sympathy of the whole Town Council at the recent announcement of the death of Mr Harry Foren, long-time friend of Godmanchester and sometime Mace Bearer to a succession of Mayors of Godmanchester. AGREED UNANIMOUSLY.

Cllr GOFF suggested that the Town Clerk should write to the Environment Agency to enquire about the feasibility of creating a leisure area for sitting out on the area of The Causeway behind the railings and next to Ethnic Origins by either extending the grassed area or building a platform out into the water. AGREED.

THE NEXT COUNCIL MEETING WILL BE HELD ON 21 JULY 2005.

The meeting ended at 10.37 pm Mayor