

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD IN THE GODMANCHESTER TOWN HALL ON THURSDAY 19 JANUARY 2006

PRESENT: H R BUTCHER Town Mayor, M COHEN Deputy Town Mayor,
Councillors: D BROWN, W D BUTTERWORTH, Mrs H HULL, C R HYAMS, J
COXHEAD, A GOFF, L HOLGATE, E KYNOCH, Mrs A M LOOKER, C VANE PERCY
Town Clerk: Mrs M LIDDIARD

APOLOGIES: Cllrs: Mrs C A GODLEY, Mrs E TREHARNE-JONES

ABSENT: Cllr Mrs B MOORE

There were no members of the public present.

TOWN MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS.

The MAYOR advised that he had represented the Town on 7 occasions since the last meeting. The DEPUTY MAYOR had represented the Town on 2 occasions since the previous meeting. Cllr Mrs HULL had represented the Town Council at the HSCP Thematic Group meeting.

The MAYOR reported that the Mayoral chain had been repaired and cleaned. He has been advised that the current valuation of the Mayoral chain is inaccurate. It was AGREED that both the Mayoral chain and the Town Mace should be valued and a cost of £300 was APPROVED. The MAYOR also informed the Town Council that the current Mayoral robes were purchased in 1922 and paid for by the Town Councillors of the time.

The MAYOR reported that we have taken delivery of 20 tables for use in the QES. The old tables would need to be transported to Judith's Field and their tables disposed of. Cllr BROWN volunteered to liaise with Cllr BUTTERWORTH to move the furniture.
NOTE: Tables transferred from QES to JF and old tables from JF disposed of.

The MAYOR reported the Carol Service held on 17th December was well attended by local residents and good feedback on the event had been received.

The MAYOR advised he would not be putting himself forward for the role of MAYOR and would be standing down in May. The Town Clerk will ensure proposal forms are distributed with the minutes.

The MAYOR thanked all those who had attended the funeral service for David Comben. It had been suggested that a tree be planted in his memory, however it was AGREED that it would be more appropriate to place a placque in the Garden of Rest. Town Clerk to obtain costs.

06/001 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING.

The Minutes of the meeting held on 15 December 2005 were APPROVED and signed as a complete and accurate record.

06/002 MATTERS ARISING.

The Outstanding Actions List, dated 19 January 2006 was reviewed.

Cllr BROWN declared an interest in the item of repairs to the fence at Judith's Field. Cllr BROWN had submitted costs for the repair of the fence at the entrance to Judith's Field in the sum of £200. This was APPROVED.

Gaskell & Associates had submitted a quotation in the sum of £550 for the re-valuation of the Town Hall and QES. This sum was APPROVED. They further submitted a cost of £150 for providing a valuation for Judith's Field. This sum was APPROVED. Town Clerk would write to instruct the firm to carry out the valuations.

Signs have been ordered for all play areas stating appropriate age ranges for the play equipment. The MAYOR reported he had met with a representative of Wicksteed and confirmed that modification of the piece of equipment as suggested by Cllr Mrs TREHARNE-JONES was not possible as it would prevent use by the intended age group. The MAYOR requested approval to obtain costs for a play scheme for younger children to be provided in this play area. It was AGREED costs could be obtained.

An additional doorbell, at wheelchair height, had been installed at the Town Hall. A sign would be added saying "please ring for assistance".

The Town Clerk is still seeking clarification regarding ownership of the carpark. It was AGREED the Architect should be instructed to prepare a detailed specification in relation to the preferred option of raising the level of the carpark to accommodate disabled access to the Town Hall. Particular concern was expressed regarding drainage and damp proof courses. Town Clerk to write to Architect.

All Councillors have received copies of past correspondence regarding the Community Swimming Pool. Cllr MRS HULL advised that the school will be holding a meeting in the near future, when the issues concerning the swimming pool will be discussed. It was therefore AGREED it was not appropriate for the Town Council to discuss this issue at this time.

06/003 CORRESPONDENCE.

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

Cllrs were advised the case brought by the Ramblers Association regarding the right of way at Monks Pitt had been rejected by The Court of Appeal. The next stage would be an appeal to the House of Lords.

The next Local Access Forum meeting will be held on 31 January. The MAYOR hopes to attend.

Cllr BROWN would like to attend the next CPRE course being held in March covering how Councils should assess planning applications. Town Clerk to book a place.

Jacowe Joinery have provided a quotation for the replacement of the noticeboard in London Road. Comparison was made with previous quotes received and it was AGREED to accept

the quotation for £947 for supply and installation of the noticeboard from Jacowe. Town Clerk to write and confirm.

The Secretary of St Mary's PCC has written asking the Town Council to look at the uneven path outside the gates, which were installed last year. The metal runner for the gates is a trip hazard and the PCC have asked that the area around the gates be levelled. It was AGREED Cllr VANE PERCY would draw up a specification and sketch plan of the suggested work required.

The Tourist Information Office located in Huntingdon library is to close when the library service moves. It will not re-open until the Customer Service Centre has been completed scheduled for 2008. Town Clerk would write to express the Town Council's dismay, and to ask that all directional street signs be removed, so users of the service are not mis-directed.

One bid in the sum of £25 has been received from U3A for the purchase of the old Town Office photocopier. It was AGREED to accept this offer. Town Clerk to liaise with U3A.

A letter from Mr Fechter regarding an abortive stopping up order for land at 9 Tudor Road was discussed in detail. Mr Fechter considers the costs for his abortive application should be met by the Town Council. Town Clerk would formally acknowledge receipt of his letter and request further information from CCC.

Mr Bernasconi had written, further to the final payment being made in November 2005, requesting £1544 in respect of a throw arch and lantern. Cllr BUTTERWORTH and Cllr VANE PERCY confirmed the situation regarding the tender process, contract and payments made. Cllr BUTTERWORTH will liaise with the Town Clerk to ensure Mr Bernasconi had all the relevant information provided to support the Town Council's position that he had received full and final payment under the terms of the contract.

06/004 ACCOUNTS.

The accounts set out in Appendix B were APPROVED. Town Clerk was advised that payments for car-parking at Judith's Field should be shown separately in accounts.

06/005 PLANNING APPLICATIONS AND CORRESPONDENCE.

The applications and correspondence set out in Appendix C were considered. Cllr MRS LOOKER declared an interest in relation to application ref 0600071TELDDET re the installation of a gas generator at Bears Croft Farm and left the room for the duration of the discussion. The Town Clerk was to advise HDC of the Council's recommendations.

The Town Council was concerned about the number of HGVs parking overnight in Roman Way as they were restricting access for residents and emergency vehicles. It was proposed that the 7.5T sign should be re-located further south on London Road. Town Clerk should convey the Council's concerns to the Highways Department.

Cllr BROWN queried whether the sun canopy installed at an address in Post Street had received planning consent. Town Clerk would write to the Enforcement Officer at HDC.

06/006 DISTRICT COUNCIL REPORTS.

Cllr HYAMS advised that the Offords Action group Court case regarding the consultation on the A14 improvements had been lost. They had 7 days in which to lodge an appeal.

Cllr HYAMS read a report from Cllr MRS GODLEY confirming the decision regarding the Wigmore Farm proposed development had been delayed as the developer was required to provide more information on several issues.

06/007 WORKING PARTY (WP) REPORTS.

Cemetery. Cllr COHEN advised the Town Council that he had discussed the future requirements for the cemetery with Mr Childs and was awaiting a formal response.

Environment. The MAYOR reported we had not been successful in our bid for funds for improved parking at the Avenue Cottages and Betts Close through Jointly Funded Minor Improvements. Town Clerk would copy the reply confirming those who had been successful to all Cllrs for information.

The letter providing the Town Council's comments on traffic calming would be sent once Cllr KYNOCH has made his comments known to the MAYOR.

Finance. There had been no meeting of the WP.

Flood Defences. There had been no meeting of the WP.

Health & Safety. Drafts of the checklists had been passed to Cllr Mrs TREHARNE-JONES for comment.

Property/Judith's Field. A visual audit meeting was held on 20 December 2005 to discuss issues at Judith's Field. A positive action plan was produced and had been issued to all Cllrs. It had been suggested the main gate to Judith's Field be locked from dusk to dawn, but it was AGREED this was not feasible. The approved plans for the Twigden Homes Development included a bridge over the ditch and access for the residents of this development onto Judith's Field, however this had not been implemented, and this access had been closed off to improve security to the area and prevent anti-social behaviour in the vicinity. The Council AGREED that the bridge and access should be re-instated with the proviso that the access was gated and could be locked should the need arise. Cllr Mrs HULL would put this suggestion to Barbara Gowling for consideration. Cllr KYNOCH stated the gate would need to be locked at least one day a year.

Other Representative Groups/Twinning/ Youth Initiative.

The MAYOR will attend a Twinning meeting on Monday 23rd January. The MAYOR reminded Cllrs that the Twinning Business Meeting was being held in February. Godmanchester Town Council will host the meeting on Saturday 18th February and provide lunch that day. APPROVAL was given to meet costs up to £500.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS.

Cllr COHEN advised that following personal comments he had raised about speeding traffic on the 1198, safety cameras had been deployed on several occasions and this had resulted in a reduction in speed.

Cllr BROWN asked whether the Probation Service could be approached with a view to a Community Service team keeping the waterfront along the Causeway clear. Town Clerk will write to request this.

Cllr BROWN asked all Cllrs to consider whether the Town Council could do more in-house fundraising through social events. It was suggested he talk to Godmanchester Community Association in the first instance.

Town Clerk advised that a request had been made by the Baptist Church, to book the QES for a 36 hour period. Discussion took place regarding various restrictions that would need to be placed on the hirer, appropriate charges to be levied and Town Clerk will need to confirm the position regarding insurance but no objection to the booking in principle was raised. Town Clerk to keep Town Council advised.

Cllr VANE PERCY left at 10.30pm

Cllr KYNOCH has experienced several problems receiving e-mails. The Town Clerk confirmed ntl customers had all had problems but she had been advised it was not a fault on the part of the outgoing server. All ntl users to be aware of this.

THE NEXT COUNCIL MEETING WILL BE HELD ON 23 FEBRUARY 2006.

The meeting ended at 10.45 pm Mayor