

**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL TOWN COUNCIL MEETING HELD IN THE TOWN HALL ON THURSDAY 18 JUNE 2009**

**PRESENT:** M COHEN Town Mayor, D BROWN Deputy Town Mayor  
Councillors: M DOBBIE, J DUTTON, C R HYAMS, Mrs A M LOOKER, Ms D MIDDLETON, D O'DONNELL, C RICHARDSON, D TAYLOR, N WELLS, G WILSON, Mrs S WORTHINGTON

Town Clerk: Mrs M LIDDIARD  
Mace Bearer: Mr M WILLIAMS

**APOLOGIES:** Cllrs: H R BUTCHER, T CANT, Mrs H HULL, C VANE PERCY

4 members of the public were in attendance

The MAYOR asked all present to observe a moment of quiet reflection, following the recent deaths of Peter Ballantine, Treasurer for St Mary the Virgin PCC and Paul Burbridge, a Godmanchester resident who had worked tirelessly to raise funds for Cancer Research. The MAYOR confirmed Mr Burbridge's funeral would take place on Thursday 25th June in the Church of St Mary the Virgin.

**09/075 TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES AND REASONS FOR ABSENCE**

CLLR BUTCHER: holiday, CLLR CANT: work shift pattern, CLLR MRS HULL: ill health, CLLR VANE PERCY: work commitment. CLLR MRS LOOKER and CLLR MRS WORTHINGTON, would attend and apologised in advance that they would arrive late.

**09/076 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:**

09/076.1 CLLR TAYLOR declared an interest in the Grant Applications received from the Baptist Church as he is a member of the church. CLLR DUTTON declared an interest in the Grant Application received from Huntingdon Community Radio as he is a personal friend of the applicant. THE MAYOR declared an interest in the Grant Applications received from St Mary's 0-5 group as his grand-daughter attends, Huntingdonshire CAB as he is a volunteer, and Friends of the Queen Elizabeth School as he is a member. CLLR WILSON declared an interest in an item of correspondence received from the Environment Agency as they are his employer.

CLLR WELLS, CLLR O'DONNELL and CLLR MS MIDDLETON declared an interest in the correspondence relating to parking on Old Court Hall as they live in the area being discussed. They further confirmed that they should have declared a prejudicial interest in the item relating to short term parking discussed at the previous meeting, but had not known until the item was discussed the location of the proposed short term parking bays.

09/076.2 CLLR WILSON reported he had received a letter from HDC Monitoring Officer advising him they were investigating a breach of the Code of Conduct as he had failed to declare a personal interest at a Town Council meeting when a letter from the Environment Agency had been discussed. This he should have done, as the Environment Agency are his employers. He had not been advised who had raised the matter, nor had he been advised of the outcome of discussions by the Monitoring Officer at this stage.

## **09/077 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The Town Clerk added the words “Cllr Wells declared an interest on item 09/072 at the June Town Council meeting” to reflect the declaration of interest that should have been made by CLLR WELLS and CLLR O’DONNELL. This was initialled by THE MAYOR. The Minutes of the meeting held on 21 May 2009 were then APPROVED and signed as a complete and accurate record.

## **09/078 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SESSION:**

THE MAYOR asked CLLR WELLS, CLLR O’DONNELL and CLLR Ms MIDDLETON to leave the room, in case any member of the public wished to make comments on the parking issue, as they had all declared an interest.

Mr Williams confirmed he was making progress with presentation of information on the closure of Godmanchester Station, and he thanked CLLR MS MIDDLETON for including an article in the Summer Town Council newsletter.

Mr Doherty noted branches had fallen from a couple of willow trees on the Recreation Ground. He confirmed the trees had been planted in 1953 and he expressed his concern about all the trees and suggested they would all need inspection to prevent further loss or damage.

Mr Pauley made a request for the return of the wide benches that had been sited at the front, or Post Street side of the Queen Elizabeth School. He suggested it might be a project for consideration by either Godmanchester in Bloom or in conjunction with marking 2012. Details of his suggestions would be passed to CLLR MRS LOOKER and also to the Godmanchester in Bloom Committee.

CLLR WELLS, CLLR O’DONNELL and CLLR Ms MIDDLETON rejoined the meeting.

## **09/079 TOWN MAYOR’S ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

THE MAYOR had represented the Town on 6 occasions since the last meeting and the DEPUTY MAYOR on 1 occasion.

THE MAYOR advised of forthcoming events: St Mary the Virgin Church Fete: Saturday 20th June from 2pm – 4pm. Godmanchester Community Primary School Summer Fete from 4pm. Gala Day and Picnic in the Park on 4th and 5th July. THE MAYOR invited any Cllrs able to join him for the judging of the Best Kept Allotment which would take place on Friday 26 June at 7pm.

THE MAYOR reported that in the previous week two willow trees had suffered the loss of a branch each. The Town Clerk had been advised by the tree specialist that there were severe cracks into the crowns of both trees, but work could not be done until the HDC Tree Officer had been to inspect as the trees are protected as they are in our conservation area. The Tree Officer had advised the tree nearest the Chinese Bridge could be removed completely if necessary, and he further advised that all remaining willows should be pollarded by up to 30%. Urgent work would be carried out to the 2 damaged trees and quotations obtained for any work required to the remaining trees along Queen’s Walk.

## **09/080 TOWN CLERK'S REPORT ON MATTERS ARISING:**

09/080.1 The Town Clerk had provided an updated schedule of outstanding matters. Confirmation was provided that Parish Plans and the Town Council website would be discussed at the July Town Council meeting; the War Memorial would be cleaned and lettering re-done where necessary during the first week in July; and the painting conservator had visited the Town Hall to inspect the Mayoral Board and a report containing costs and recommendations was awaited.

09/080.2 CLLR MS MIDDLETON had provided a draft copy of the Summer edition of the Town Council newsletter. Details of the proposed work to the Queen's Walk willow trees would be included, but the content was APPROVED. Costs in the sum of £299 were also APPROVED. CLLR MS MIDDLETON hoped that CLLR HYAMS would be able to work on the newsletter early the following week so that distribution might be by the end of June.

## **09/081 DISTRICT/COUNTY COUNCIL REPORTS**

CLLR WILSON and CLLR DUTTON were congratulated on their election to the County Council seats.

CLLR DUTTON advised a report had been prepared regarding licensed taxi cabs and a code introduced to ensure all taxis observed standards of safety/condition of vehicle/driver courtesy etc.

CLLR DUTTON advised the stars rating system for food standards for businesses preparing and serving food had been a great success with more than 5000 hits on the website from the public seeking information on how local businesses had been rated. Businesses were also looking to improve their ratings and gain more stars.

CLLR BROWN asked CLLR DUTTON to raise the issue of temporary signage with CCC, for pedestrian restrictions on the Chinese Bridge so that it was in place before Gala Day and Picnic in the Park.

CLLR BROWN asked CLLR DUTTON to hasten the matter of the damaged rail fencing on The Avenue, under the A14 flyover. It was believed the land belonged to The Freemen of Godmanchester.

TOWN CLERK'S NOTE: The fencing was repaired during the week of 22nd June by Huntingdon District Council

CLLR MRS LOOKER arrived at 8.25pm

## **09/082 REVIEW OF COUNCILLOR'S PORTFOLIOS**

The list of portfolios held by Cllrs was reviewed and the amended list would be circulated to all Cllrs.

## **09/083 GRANT APPLICATIONS**

The list of Grant Applications was considered. It was AGREED that the applications received from Clarence House Day Nurseries and Godmanchester Rovers Youth Football Club would

be considered in July subject to provision of additional information. This did not guarantee a grant being made. Town Clerk would write to all applicants to advise of the outcome.

CLLR MRS WORTHINGTON arrived at 9.35pm

CLLR HYAMS arrived at 9.45pm

### **09/084 REQUESTS TO ATTEND TRAINING COURSES**

A schedule of requests for training sessions run by CPALC (Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Association of Local Councils) was considered and it was AGREED that the requests be granted at a cost of £670. It was further AGREED that the Annual Membership fee and joining fee for the Town Clerk to become a member of The Society of Local Council Clerk's at a cost of £161 were APPROVED. Town Clerk would confirm all places on courses and submit her membership application.

### **09/085 CORRESPONDENCE - see Appendix A**

THE MAYOR advised a letter had been received from the businesses in Old Court Hall regarding their request for short term parking provision to assist their customers. The Town Clerk confirmed she had met with the Traffic Supervisor for our area to discuss ongoing issues in Godmanchester, and had been advised that removal of double yellow lines was unlikely. CLLR DUTTON was annoyed he had not been invited to attend this meeting as he holds the portfolio for traffic issues and road safety. THE MAYOR confirmed the Town Council is willing to support provision of short term parking to benefit the local businesses, but not if their provision would increase danger to road users, or reduce visibility for drivers, cyclists or pedestrians.

The Town Clerk advised an application had been received for the 2010/11 Jointly Funded Minor Improvement Bids and parking provision at Old Court Hall could possibly be considered as a bid. CLLR DUTTON recommended the Town Council should pursue the ongoing traffic calming needed in Crowhill and Sweetings Road in the next round of Jointly Funded Minor Improvement Bids rather than consider provision of a lay-by for parking in Old Court Hall. This was AGREED by those present.

CLLR HYAMS reported an email had been received regarding proposed modification, with the installation of handrails, to the 2 existing disabled access fishing platforms provided by the Environment Agency, and located along Queen's Walk. CLLR BROWN had expressed concern about the size and the gradient to the platforms and had asked whether a wheelchair could safely access or leave the platform, whether or not the proposed handrails were fitted. CLLR HYAMS and CLLR BROWN would meet the Environment Agency Representative on site to discuss this issue further.

CLLR O'DONNELL confirmed the report from the Independent Financial Advisor had been received. A copy would be forwarded to all Cllrs for their information.

### **09/086 FINANCIAL/ACCOUNTS.**

09/086.1 The list of payments to be made in Appendix B was approved. Town Clerk would attempt to recover some payment from Russell's Circus following the loss of the lockable bollards during their visit to Judith's Field.

09/086.2 Councillors had received a copy of the Petty Cash Reconciliation for the period to 18th June 2009.

09/086.3 Councillors received a copy of the budget report on the year to date.

09/086.4 Three quotations for the replacement of the Town Hall entrance doors had been received and were discussed. It was AGREED to accept the quotation from Jacowe Joinery in the sum of £1245.84. Town Clerk would clarify whether softwood or hardwood should be used, whether the existing door frame would or should be replaced, and would also seek clarification regarding the end finish. Town Clerk would also liaise with the Conservation Team at HDC whose approval was required before any work could be undertaken.

### **09/087 PLANNING APPLICATIONS AND CORRESPONDENCE**

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

### **MISCELLEANOUS**

CLLR MS MIDDLETON advised she had arranged for a Town Council stand for Gala Day where we could seek feedback regarding play facilities for Judith's Field. It would also be a good opportunity to encourage comment on whether the Town welcomed or would be interested in the production of a Parish Plan. All Cllrs invited to assist on the stand on 4th July.

CLLR MS MIDDLETON advised grants of up to £50k were available for play facilities for 8-13 year olds. There was a tight timetable to submit an application but in the first instance a meeting would be held on 25th June to discuss whether this was feasible. All Cllrs invited to attend.

CLLR HYAMS reported the correct name for the nursery sited in Park Lane, Godmanchester, is the Huntingdonshire Community Nursery.

The Town Clerk asked all Cllrs to review their register of Financial and Other interests, and if unchanged sign a form to declare "no change".

**THE NEXT COUNCIL MEETING WILL BE HELD ON 16 JULY 2009 IN THE TOWN HALL**

The meeting ended at 11.14pm Mayor