

**MINUTES OF THE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING HELD IN THE  
TOWN HALL ON THURSDAY 20 APRIL 2017**

PRESENT: P MORGAN: Town Mayor;  
Councillors: Mrs S CONBOY (Deputy Mayor) G CAMPBELL; A HOOKER; D KING; Ms J MACLEOD; P  
MALLEY; Mrs M RADFORD; D UNDERWOOD; C VANE PERCY; G WILSON; Mrs S WILSON;  
Mrs S WORTHINGTON; J YOUNG

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

1 member of the public was in attendance

**17/045 TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES AND REASONS FOR ABSENCE**

**ACTION**

CLLR TAPLIN: holiday; CLLR McINNES: holiday; CLLR SPOWART: holiday

**17/046 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

CLLR MALLEY: planning application for 23 Bluegate – he has advised applicant. CLLR HOOKER:  
planning application for 30 Crowhill - applicant known to him. CLLR VANE PERCY: item on  
Environment Portfolio report re the siting of bench and plinth.

**17/047 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The Minutes of the Town Council meeting held on 16 March 2017 were duly APPROVED and  
signed as a complete and accurate record.

**17/048 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SESSION**

THE MAYOR introduced Julie Royle, recently appointed Administrative Assistant who was  
formally welcomed.

The monthly draw for the 800 club took place.

**17/049 TOWN MAYORS ANNOUNCEMENTS**

THE MAYOR has represented the town on 4 occasions since the last meeting.

**17/050 OUTSTANDING MATTERS**

CLLR G WILSON reported that he had sent an email to CCC regarding the boundary wall between  
the school land and non-conformist burial ground, who had undertaken a structural survey of  
the wall and were awaiting a response from the school. CLLR G WILSON had made it clear again  
that the Town Council had absolutely no ownership of the wall. CLLR G WILSON would write  
again if no progress had been made in the next month.

CLLR G WILSON reported we had not received an updated schedule of anticipated CIL receipts  
but the first tranche was due in April 2017.

Cllr G Wilson

The Town Clerk advised that the Senior Citizens had not yet provided copies of their utility bills  
for the previous year. Once received, the Town Council would consider the future level of  
contributions towards the Town Hall utility bills.

**17/051 CORRESPONDENCE**

Business Portfolio

The list of correspondence received was noted.  
The Environment Portfolio would draft a response to the letters received from residents in  
respect of direct access onto Buttermel Meadow.

## **17/052 PLANNING APPLICATIONS AND CORRESPONDENCE**

The applications and correspondence set out in Appendix 17/052 were considered. The Town Clerk would advise HDC of the Council's recommendations.

Environment  
Portfolio

CLLR S WILSON reported that two amended applications had already been determined by HDC prior to the Town Council submitting further comments. The Town Clerk would liaise with CLLR S WILSON to write to HDC to seek clarification on the process used at HDC when making such decisions and whether the Town Council's comments after an application had been determined were worth submitting.

Town Clerk

CLLR CONBOY advised that the possible waste disposal site on the former Hemingford Abbots golf course had not yet been submitted as a formal planning application, however, the information available indicated there would be a significant number of vehicle movements with some overnight operation. If a formal application was submitted the Town Council would be consulted.

Cllr S Wilson/  
Town Clerk

CLLR S WILSON advised that the Town Clerk had made enquiries to book the A14 Mobile Visitor Centre for 2 May (date of the Annual Town Meeting) to be parked in the Town Hall car park. However as the Town Council had not advertised the attendance of the Visitor Centre or distributed any flyers, it was AGREED to look at other dates and possible venues.

## **17/053 NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN**

CLLR CONBOY presented a report the contents of which were noted.

## **17/054 FINANCIAL AND ACCOUNTS**

17/054.1 The list of payments to be made in Appendix 17/054.1 was APPROVED.

17/039.2 Councillors received a copy of the salary payments, Petty Cash Reconciliation for the period to 20 April, a copy of the budget report on the year to date, a copy of the monthly bank reconciliation approved by the Mayor and an end of year budget report and quarterly bank reconciliation.

17/054.3 The Town Council AGREED to adopt the nationally agreed and revised pay scales for the financial year 2017-18 which were applicable for the Town Clerk and Deputy Town Clerk's pay.

## **17/055 TO RECEIVE A REPORT FROM THE INTERNAL AUDITOR AND REVIEW THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE SYSTEM OF INTERNAL CONTROL**

Cllrs were presented with a report from the internal auditor which covered 49 points investigated by the internal auditor. The report had noted that in each category the Council provided a high level of assurance. CLLR UNDERWOOD asked that the Council formally recorded thanks to the Town Clerk for the exemplary outcome of this audit.

The Town Clerk explained the financial controls in place to record all financial transactions of the Council and involvement of Cllrs who carried out random checks on the process for invoicing and receipts. CLLR G WILSON reported that he had carried out the most recent audit check and he confirmed the process was rigorous.

The Town Council therefore AGREED current financial controls were adequate.

**CLLR VANE PERCY arrived at 20.31**

## **17/056 TO APPROVE THE ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT IN RESPECT OF THE ANNUAL RETURN FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2017**

The statements of assurance in respect of the Annual Return for the year ending 31 March 2017 were read to those present and all statements were APPROVED. THE MAYOR and Town Clerk signed the Annual Governance Statement.

**17/057 TO CONSIDER THE ACCOUNT STATEMENTS AND APPROVE THE ANNUAL RETURN FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2016**

The Town Clerk presented the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2017 together with a copy of the Annual Return and an explanation on how all figures had been reached. It was RESOLVED to approve the accounts, and THE MAYOR and Town Clerk signed the Accounting Statements made in the Annual Return. The Town Clerk confirmed a notice would be displayed from 2 June 2017 and would be placed on the Town Council's website to advise members of the public that the accounts would be available for inspection from 5<sup>th</sup> June – 14<sup>th</sup> July and would be submitted to the auditor by 12<sup>th</sup> June 2017. The Town Clerk was thanked for the work that had gone into presenting the accounts.

**17/058 BUSINESS REPORT**

CLLR UNDERWOOD presented a report, the contents of which were noted. He reported that a number of policies, thought to have been adopted had not been formally presented to the Town Council for approval. The Business Portfolio would look at the Staff Handbook and the policies therein along with revisions to Standing Orders and Financial Regulations and bring these documents to the Town Council for approval at the May meeting. Significant changes would be highlighted for ease of reference.

Town Clerk

CLLR UNDERWOOD reported that the issue of VAT in respect of capital projects was very complex and professional advice was required to ensure the Town Council acted properly in managing VAT. An initial free of charge meeting with a VAT consultant had been arranged and it was noted that once the initial meeting had taken place, further meetings or reports to the Council may incur charges.

CLLR YOUNG would progress the review of cemetery charges and regulations. All Cllrs would be invited to give their views.

CLLR UNDERWOOD suggested Cllrs and the office team put together information so that better co-ordination on legal matters could be achieved.

**17/059 PROPERTY REPORT**

CLLR CAMPBELL presented a report the contents of which were noted. Drawings and a schedule of works in relation to the project to refurbish the QES had been received from Donald Insall. Some detail was missing and the Property Portfolio would make recommendations to fill in any gaps. CLLR CAMPBELL stated it was essential to move the project forward in order to meet programme timetable. It was AGREED to proceed to ask Donald Insall to complete the specification and the proposed list of four contractors was APPROVED. It was AGREED these contractors would be invited to submit to tender and names of two other contractors would be held in reserve should anyone decline to submit to tender.

Cllr Young

All Cllrs/  
Town Clerk

Discussions would take place with the Porch Museum who might remove all artefacts from the porch during the refurbishment programme so any damp in the porch could be treated.

CLLR HOOKER and CLLR CAMPBELL would look into the cost and options of providing a temporary toilet during the refurbishment period as public toilets would be inaccessible.

Property  
Portfolio/  
Town Clerk

It was AGREED to allow a provisional sum for the kitchen, as a final decision as to the form it should take had not been made. Further discussions would take place to determine whether the kitchen should allow for full meals to be prepared and cooked on the premises, or whether provision should be made just for re-heating and serving of buffet style food.

CLLR CAMPBELL advised that he and CLLR WORTHINGTON had met with representatives from the Environment Agency and Mr Rothwell to discuss the Mill Steps. The EA had produced documentation advising that the Town Council own the mill steps structure, and furthermore they had advised that the mill sluice had no value or purpose in respect of flood defences following installation of the flood alleviation scheme, so they had no further interest in the sluice. The EA had commissioned an asset report of the mill sluice which indicated short,

Cllr Hooker/  
Cllr Campbell

medium and long term repair and maintenance work required and they had been asked to clarify exactly what needed to be done immediately and whether they would be in a position to contribute towards the costs. Any health & safety responsibilities would have to be undertaken by the Town Council before addressing replacement of the railings.

Property Portfolio

It was noted that the EA have spent money on the Mill sluice in the past, that the river has to be managed and that the issue of HDC's claim of the Riparian rights has not been resolved – all of which may have a bearing on discussions on a way forward. It was AGREED that the Town Clerk would refer back to the solicitor and then to HDC in respect of riparian rights.

CLLR CAMPBELL reported that HDC had arranged for an urgent inspection of the trees on The Avenue and had advised that there were no immediate health & safety risks. They had carried out maintenance work to the trees on the green outside 3 The Avenue which was on their map as an orphan site, but at this time, the legal department was in the process of resolving ownership and maintenance responsibilities for the remaining trees on The Avenue. The Town Clerk would write again to expedite this matter.

CLLR CAMPBELL reported that a meeting had taken place to determine a location for a new double sided Town Council noticeboard. It had been AGREED that the preferred location was in the Town Hall car park on the Post Street side where the small parking bay met the main car park. This would be sourced and installed on completion of the refurbishment work in the QES. It would not impact on future installations of Christmas trees.

Town Clerk

### **17/060 ENVIRONMENT REPORT**

CLLR CONBOY presented a report the contents of which were noted. Following discussion and a vote, it was AGREED that the recently installed plinth sited on the Recreation Ground provided for siting of a memorial bench, would be removed by Alan Hooker (at his personal cost) and a new plinth would be installed with the cost to be paid by Christopher Vane Percy. The Town Office would instruct a contractor to install the new plinth and turf from the site of the new plinth would be used to fill the space previously occupied by the plinth to be removed.

Town Clerk

It was AGREED to instruct the Grounds Maintenance contractor to water planters in the town at a cost of £420 for 20 visits this year. It was AGREED GMCiB would be invited to review the position for future years.

Property Portfolio

It was noted that the hanging baskets would not be in the colour scheme intended of yellow blue and white, but this was noted for the following year. The Town Clerk would instruct the Grounds Maintenance Contractor ahead of the planting season in 2018.

The Deputy Town Clerk was looking into provision of "No Mooring" signs on the recreation ground.

### **17/061 HEALTH & SAFETY**

A Health and Safety report was received. Discussion on the Health & Safety Policy was deferred to the following meeting.

Town Clerk

**PUBLIC BODIES (ADMISSION TO MEETINGS) ACT 1960 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC: It was resolved that in accordance with Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 and by reason of the confidential nature of the following item of business, the Press and Public were excluded from the meeting**

Town Clerk

### **17/062 TO CONSIDER RECOMMENDATIONS IN RESPECT OF NOMINATIONS FOR THE AWARD OF HONORARY FREEMAN OF GODMANCHESTER**

Town Clerk

THE MAYOR reported that he had met with CLLR CONBOY and two former Mayors and he presented recommendations for 3 people to be awarded the title of Honorary Freeman of Godmanchester of: Keith Gabb; Stephen Harris; John Thackray. These recommendations were unanimously AGREED and the Town Clerk would invite the three successful candidates to attend the Annual Town Meeting to receive the award. It was AGREED that the Business Portfolio

Deputy Town Clerk

would draw up a formal policy on a timetable for future awards to be

Clr Taplin

### **17/063 PERSONNEL**

CLLR UNDERWOOD presented a report which was noted. Following a breach of confidentiality after the previous meeting, Cllrs were reminded that they must all abide by the Code of Conduct and Standing Orders in place and should not disclose any confidential matters to anyone outside the Town Council.

CLLR UNDERWOOD referred to the earlier Business Report and confirmed the Business Group would work with the Town Office to ensure all policies were up to date and formally adopted by the Town Council. This included a recent request from the Town Clerk and Deputy Town Clerk for a contribution towards the cost of eye-glasses and reimbursement for the cost of an eye test. This would be clarified by the next meeting.

CLLR UNDERWOOD confirmed Cllrs would meet with Kate Russell (HR Consultant) in the coming week to look at progressing the restructuring of the office.

Town Clerk

**PUBLIC BODIES (ADMISSION TO MEETINGS) ACT 1960 RE-ADMITTANCE OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC. It was resolved that the confidential business having been concluded, that the Press and Public be re-admitted to the meeting.**

### **17/064 SELECTION OF TOWN MAYOR AND DEPUTY TOWN MAYOR FOR 2017/2018**

CLLR MORGAN and CLLR CONBOY addressed the meeting as candidates for the role of TOWN MAYOR for the year 2017-2018. CLLR YOUNG addressed the meeting as candidate for the role of DEPUTY TOWN MAYOR and the Town Clerk read a statement from CLLR TAPLIN in respect of his nomination for the role of DEPUTY TOWN MAYOR.

All Cllrs

Following a vote, counted by the Town Clerk and verified by the Mace Bearer, THE MAYOR announced that the Mayor Elect for 2017-2018 would be CLLR CONBOY and the Deputy Mayor Elect for 2017-2018 would be CLLR TAPLIN.

Business Portfolio

**THE ANNUAL TOWN MEETING will take place in the Queen Elizabeth School on Tuesday 2 May 2017 starting at 8pm**

**THE NEXT TOWN COUNCIL MEETING WILL BE THE ANNUAL TOWN COUNCIL MEETING TO BE HELD ON 18 MAY 2017 IN THE QUEEN ELIZABETH SCHOOL STARTING AT 7.30pm**

The meeting ended at 22.01pm

Mayor

*Full copies of reports mentioned in the text above may be viewed in the Town Office.*