

MINUTES of the meeting of the TOWN COUNCIL held in the Queen Elizabeth School on the 27th September, 1984

PRESENT: Councillor R.T.D. Hughes (Town Mayor)  
Councillors Mrs. E.C. Conway, B.P. Doherty, M.J. Hopkinson,  
Mrs. V. Harris, J.M. James, L. Miller, Mrs. M.L. Middlemiss,  
C.W. Parcell, Mrs. C. Parker, A.E. Sursham and Mrs. P. Tenten.

Apologies for absence from or late arrival at the meeting were submitted on behalf of Councillors M.J. Hopkinson, J.M. James and J.H. Lewis.

#### PRAYERS

Prayers were said by Rev. D. Clarke, Vicar of Godmanchester.

#### ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Town Mayor announced that it was normally a pleasure to announce to the Town Council news of the various activities and engagements which fell to him to fulfill through the office of Town Mayor. However, it was distasteful to him to say that because of the necessity to change the date of the Town Council Meeting, a member had written in excessive terms in relation to the authority exercised by the Town Mayor. The Town Mayor went on to explain that his decision had been motivated by (a) a wish to give Working Parties additional time in which to prepare information, (b) the use of the School for the Art Exhibition, (c) a dearth of business and (d) engagements which he and the Town Clerk would otherwise have missed.

The Town Clerk added that between them they had endeavoured to inform Town Councillors of the change informally, but that, for his part, in any future similar situation, a more formal notification would be given.

The Town Mayor drew attention to (a) a Planning Seminar to be held at Welwyn Garden City on the 15 November, 1984 ,

(b) the fact that at the 900th Anniversary of Doomsday Book the 1404 Charter of Godmanchester would be exhibited, and

(c) that in the morning of the 28th September 1984 he would be concluding the tour of the Roman Way Industrial Estate, and

(d) that in the afternoon of that day he would be visiting R.A.F. Alconbury.

#### 84/51 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on the 30th August 1984 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Town Mayor.

In relation to Minute 84/40 para. 2, it was announced that Councillor Hughes was erroneously shown as a member of the Buttermel Project Management Committee .

#### 84/52 BUTTERMEL MEADOW. (c) Section 25 Agreement.

The Town Clerk reported that the Agreement received for sealing had been drawn in terms which included the provision of a metalled foot-path to a standard suitable for maintenance by the highway authority, notwithstanding the outcome of earlier negotiations in which it had been agreed that a right of way only need be provided. For that reason, the document would be returned to the Solicitor.

(b) Project.

In a wide-ranging discussion about the project, and with particular regard to the building to be provided for the young people - during which it was alleged that the project had been delayed because the Town Clerk had failed to submit an application for detailed planning permission - it emerged that -

- (a) insufficient detail about the building was available, especially with respect to drainage and other technical matters;
- (b) the young people concerned were not necessarily those who had been using the Queen Elizabeth School as a "youth club";
- (c) the members of the Project Management Committee had no formal constitution but comprised Mrs. S. Gattis, Mrs. Johnson, Ms. Glen Pollitt, Mr. C. Dalleywater, Councillor B.P. Doherty, Councillor Mrs. C. Parker, Mr. C. Reeves and representatives of children. Of these, only Ms. Glen Pollitt actively associated herself with the young people;
- (d) there was a need for much more technical information & assistance;
- (e) there was likely to be a need for direct involvement by the Town Council; and
- (f) capital expenditure estimated to be in the region of £10,000 was likely to be required.

The discussion concluded when it was agreed that insufficient technical and other details about both the proposed building and the site were known, in which respect Councillor Mrs. Parker agreed to endeavour to pursue these matters with officers of the District Council in the first instance.

84/53 GODSPA. Working Party Report.

It was reported that at a meeting held on the 4th September 1984 the Working Party had identified work to be carried out to the floors of male and female toilets for which the cost was £650.

Resolved. that the report be received and the payment be approved.

84/54 PLAYScheme 1984.

The Town Mayor reported that endeavours would be made for a meeting to take place between the Working Party and the Playscheme workers as soon as possible. However, in the meantime it had come to light that minor damage had been caused at the School and, more seriously, the freedom to use the telephone had been abused. The cost of the repairs could be readily identified but the cost of telephone calls would not be so readily identified.

The Town Council agreed that these incidents marred what otherwise appeared to have been a most successful Playscheme and

Resolved.- that the Town Council meet the cost of the minor repairs and give further consideration to the subject when more information was available.

84/55 TRINING VISITORS FROM WERTHEIM AND SAION DE PROVENCE

In giving consideration to the activities of August 31st to 2nd September, the Town Council agreed that it had been an enjoyable and worthwhile week-end. The Town Mayor reported that he had received personal thanks from a representative of the Wertheim visitors and he had expressed appreciation to those in Godmanchester who had played key parts in the successful week-end. For the Working Party, it was indicated that a de-briefing meeting with counterparts of Huntingdon Town Council would be sought in order

to have a comprehensive view of twinning when the Town Council considered the subject.

#### 84/56 RECREATION AND AMENITY WORKING PARTY

An interim report by the Working Party was submitted (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) which referred to a variety of matters many of which required further consultation with other bodies, such as Anglian Water, the County Council and the District Council. With respect to the Jubilee Hut, it was reported that its refurbishment might cost up to £500 and as the Working Party had decided that it was a matter worth pursuing, an alternative quotation was being obtained. The Town Council concurred with this view upon which a further report would be presented.

The Working Party's interim report also referred to possible action with respect to trees on the Recreation Ground - treatment and additional provision - and thereupon

Resolved.- (a) that the interim Report be received and

(b) that advice and action by the District Council in respect of the trees be obtained.

#### 84/57 CRICKET GROUND

(Councillor James declared an interest in the following item and although invited to remain in the meeting, took no part in the discussion or voting thereon).

With reference to the item contained in the Town Mayor's announcements made at the last meeting, details were given of proposals and costings with respect to levelling the cricket outfield amounting to £11,750 - which the Cricket Club had decided was not feasible to undertake this year. However, the Cricket Club wished to have both ends of the cricket square cut out and re-turfed at an estimated cost of £480 plus VAT, and indicated that the Club was in a position to contribute £130 towards the cost.

(Councillor W.J. Worthington here joined the meeting)

The Town Council confirmed that it was part of their policy with respect to the maintenance of leisure facilities to assist by the making of grants and thereupon

Resolved.- that the Cricket Club be offered a grant of the balance of cost (£350 net) in the light of the fact that the VAT element would be reclaimed if the account were submitted to the Town Council.

#### 84/58 TREES

The Town Council were acquainted with an offer by the County Council to provide up to 15 trees with stakes and ties etc. and thereupon

Resolved.- that the offer be accepted with a view to planting in the Recreation Ground and Roman Way Industrial Estate (if possible).

#### 84/59 TRAFFIC IN GODMANCHURCH

With reference to Minute 84/22 copies of correspondence from the County Director of Transportation and Dr. Schenique of Ferris Hill (which had been circulated and are appended in the Minute Book) were noted, and particularly the observations of the County

Director upon the use of West Street by heavy vehicles, transportation strategy and the fact that any proposed new road between the A.14 and the B.1043 could not be justified in traffic terms. In their consideration of the subject, the Town Council's attention was given more particularly to vehicle movements along Cambridge Street and Cambridge Road where there was real threat to life as opposed to buildings as in West Street.

(Councillor Mrs. E. Tonten left the meeting at this stage).

The Town Council affirmed the view that in addition to the amount of traffic, parking and speed posed problems - although it was not intended that any remedial action should prejudice the commercial wealth of the town.

In that respect it was thereupon

Resolved.- that the Member of Parliament be acquainted with the foregoing observations and of the Town Council's concern that in any traffic management considerations, the provision of a suitable pedestrian crossing in the vicinity of the White Hart was their highest priority having regard to the increasing number of elderly residents in the town and the incidence of collisions in that area.

#### 84/60 PLANNING COMMITTEE

As indicated by the Town Mayor at the previous meeting, he requested the Town Council to indicate whether it was their wish to appoint a separate Planning Committee or Working Party. In a full discussion on the subject, a majority of Councilors indicated their wish to continue to be involved in the planning consultation process, and thereupon it was

Resolved.- that planning applications continue to be dealt with by the Town Council as at present, except that the subject be afforded higher priority on Agenda .

The same decision was taken with respect to the subject of Accounts.

#### 84/61 ST. ANNE'S LANE SITE. Indemnity Insurance.

The Town Clerk reported that the Solicitor acting in the disposal of the St. Anne's Lane site had asked that the Town Council take out an indemnity insurance having regard to the non-availability of deeds relating thereto. The Town Council concurred that this action was not unusual in such circumstances and were informed of a quotation obtained by the Solicitor - although the Town Clerk wished to seek an alternative, if possible.

Resolved.- that an Indemnity Insurance be obtained in respect of the St. Anne's Lane site at a premium not higher than £500.

#### 84/62 PLANNING APPLICATIONS

Consideration was given to the following planning applications, whereupon it was

Resolved.- that the Director of Planning be informed of the following recommendations:-

- (a) Extension to dwelling, 13 Fairy Avenue - APPROVAL
- (b) Change of use from industrial to warehousing, Unit 17, Rouchon Way - APPROVAL

- (c) Proposed express road and car parking area, Wood Green Animal Shelter, London Road - APPROVAL  
(the recommendation was made in the knowledge that the Highway Authority could direct a refusal).
- (d) Demolition of conservatory and replacement of windows and French doors, Bilox Street Farmhouse - APPROVAL

31/63 ACCOUNTS

Resolved.- that the following payments be approved.-

Black Bull Hotel (trip in function)	£346. 50
R.T.D. Tickets - reimbursement	12. 20
I.W. Jivesey - work at Godays	£650. 00
Huntingdon Town Council - promotion of tripping visit costs	£500. 05
J. A. Davie	£112. 31
Island Revenue	43. 50
Petty cash	50. 00
St. Paul's Men's Group - group maintenance	£162. 50
A.D. Plumb Ltd. - Hallow repair, J.E. School	27. 12

In relation to the accounts the Town Clerk gave information with respect to the proposed purchase of laboratory coats for 6th Formers at Hinchinbrooke School, one of whom was his son and others were Godwinchester scholars, from a supplier who dealt with local authorities at more favourable rates than could be obtained elsewhere and where the VAT element would be reclaimed as usual. Having regard to the fact that costs were likely to be reimbursed before the account was due and in the interests of assisting the young people concerned, it was

Resolved.- that the laboratory coats be acquired through the Town Council's accounts.

31/64 WIFE ELIZABETH SCHOOL. Working Party

Councillor Hopkinson reported confirmation of the decision by the District Council to adhere to their standard form of ducting for the public conveniences and that the number of cubicles would be reduced to afford more space therein. This would not affect the disabled persons' toilet.

It was also confirmed that the capital provision for the new toilets was affected by the government's imposed reductions in capital expenditure by principal authorities, and the Working Party would seek information from the District Council on when funding would be available. Confirmation was also given that the contract could be let and approved by the Town Council.

Councillor Hopkinson also reported that the Architect considered the surface treatment of school could not be ignored in the project, and the Working Party would be receiving more information on this aspect.

31/65 INITIALS

The Town Mayor displayed gifts made to the Town Council by Vertheim, Salon de Provence and Gibio and referred to earlier presentations to former Town Mayor Mrs. McCartney. The Town Council agreed that all the articles should be carefully preserved with a view to their being displayed in permanent positions in due course.

Town Mayor

*R. Plumb*

Robert.

RECREATION AND AMENITY WORKING PARTY

Proposals for improvements to the Recreation Area following a tour on the 4th September, 1984 by The Mayor, Councillors Doherty, James, Lewis and Miller.

- 1) For Discussion with A.W.A. (Recreation and Drainage Division).
  - a) To pile bank area adjoining towpath where boat moor.
  - b) To provide on banks adjoining piling concrete apron with permanent mooring rings to prevent erosion of banks.
  - c) To fight area between Chinese Bridge and first overfall bridge and Queen's Walk.
  - d) To increase the litter bin capacity near moorings and remove bins adjoining lock.
  - e) To bring water standpipe near bank for boat owners.  
(a) to (e) to be undertaken at A.W.A. expense on the understanding that the five moorings will be increased to twelve(?)
- 2) For Discussion with A.W.A. and Cambridgeshire C.C.
  - a) To re-surface the footpath between the entrance of Mill Lane, along Queen's Walk and to the footpath up to the lock.
  - b) The provision of two substantial and strong wooden bridges over the overfalls to replace the existing flimsy structures: reinforcement of the brick footings to the bridges.
- 3) In Discussion with A.W.A.
  - a) Removal of overgrown weeds and vegetation blocking junctions of the two overfall pools with the main river.
  - b) To consider removal of chain link fence protecting entrance to old lock - after completing infill of old lock.
- 4) To obtain estimate of cost for repair of the Jubilee Hut i.e. roofing, vertical timbers, removal of existing guttering and provision of strong 'vandal proof' seating sections with concrete supports.
- 5) To obtain advice from the District Council Tree Office on
  - a) Pruning existing trees in particular the willow trees along Queen's Walk.
  - b) Provision of additional trees and shrubs along west side of Recreation Ground to replace vandalised trees and plants.
  - c) Treatment of decaying oak tree near the Chinese Bridge.
- 6) For Discussion with District Council.
  - a) Landscaping of car park adjoining Mill Lane to be undertaken by District Council to include removal of concrete bollards with provision of tree screen on side adjoining river and brick flower beds to surround three sides of the area; this would increase the size of the car park especially if the boundary fronting Post Street was brought nearer the road.
  - b) Reposition entrance/exit to car park to improve access.
  - c) The car park to be marked for car spaces to obtain optimum use of the area.
  - d) Application to be made for grant for improvement of Recreation Ground Area to District Council/and or Lottery Fund Committee once total is known.

7. The Childrens Play Area.

- a) To confirm that the District Council are responsible for regular inspection of the equipment and initiate action on repair.
- b) To consider either provision of (1) Doggy Loo's or (2) a three foot high chain link fence to surround play area with two gates on footpath; all play equipment to be brought within the fenced off area.
- c) Base surrounding each item of play equipment to be given soft surface of bark chips.
- d) Sand pit to be filled in or sand replaced depending on solution to (b) above.

8. That the steps and area adjoining sluice gates near the Old Mill ~~Site~~ be cleared of excessive vegetation and thereafter regularly maintained.

9. Notices

- a) That three notices showing the new By-Laws should be prominently displayed near each entrance to the Recreation Ground.
- b) That 'No Mooring' notices should be prominently displayed near the banks other than those where mooring is allowed.

From: John Major MP.



HOUSE OF COMMONS  
LONDON SW1A 0AA

7 September 1984.

Dear Mr. Davie,

I refer to our recent exchange of correspondence about the difficult traffic problems faced in Godmanchester and attach a copy of a letter sent to me by the Director of Transportation.

Much of this letter is not directly related to Godmanchester but I do note that a detailed study of lorry movements on the B1949 has been carried out, which should prove most useful.

I propose to remain in touch with the County Council about this problem and would, of course, welcome at any time any observations or representations that the Town Council might wish to make.

Yours sincerely,

*John Major*

Dictated by Mr. Major and signed in his absence.

A.A. Davie Esq., Esq.  
3 School Lane  
Buckden  
Cambridge



Mr Burton

John Major MP  
House of Commons  
LONDON  
SW1 0AA

317742  
RHB/KED/G440/126

14 August 1984

Dear Mr Major

Traffic Problems - Godmanchester

Thank you for your letter of 5 July 1984 and for the accompanying report prepared by Dr Echenique. Dr Echenique had also forwarded me a copy of his report which I have considered carefully. My comments on the report are many but I will try and summarise them as briefly as possible.

Whilst I agree with Dr Echenique that transport is essential for the economic well-being of the country, I cannot agree that the benefits of the growth in road freight fall only to the producers, and that the remainder of the community simply suffer the disbenefits of increased road congestion, accidents and environmental damage. Dr Echenique feels this is the crux of the problem; I consider it to be misplaced logic and quite unrealistic.

The benefits to producers of an efficient transport network enables, as Dr Echenique notes, markets to be extended and prices to be kept down. Surely both of these effects are beneficial to consumers, ie the community at large.

The first section of the report then makes suggestions as to how the disbenefits of the heavy lorry can be minimised by sensible land-use planning. I agree entirely with this and can confirm that the Cambridgeshire Structure Plan, which sets out the strategic planning policy for the County, contains statements to this effect. The problem, which of course is not confined to Cambridgeshire, is how to deal with the vast number of commercial/industrial developments which have existed on particular sites, which are not well located in transport terms, for a great many years. Whilst new industrial development can be directed to sites which meet the transport objectives, the local authority has no powers to uproot existing development.

Most of the criticism of the Government in the first section of the report is simply uninformed. The Government have issued guidelines on how to deal with lorry problems (re Department of Transport Circular 2/82); the Government do tax road hauliers ( the road tax for very heavy lorries ranges between £2500 and £3100 per annum) and the Government do subsidise the building of bypasses (ie 100% for trunk roads and about 50% for other roads).

Cont'd ...

John Major MP

14 August 1984

Turning now to the particular issues in Godmanchester. Substantial residential growth is planned in the town and whilst this will lead to increased traffic on the Ouse Bridge, the characteristics of this traffic will be very different from that which travelled over the bridge in the pre-bypass days. The proportion of lorries is and will continue to be very small; in stark contrast to the situation before the bypass. Although the bridge is narrow, cars and light commercial vehicles can pass quite easily and I do not envisage that congestion at this point will ever approach the levels that used to exist.

Reference is made to the problems resulting from the "SUPERIOR" factory at Offord Cluny. Again it is somewhat misinformed. The planning consent given to SUPERIOR was issued in 1964 by the former Huntingdon and Peterborough County Council and not, as is suggested, by the District Council. The site was formerly the railway sidings/goods yard and hence the land has been the subject of an industrial type use for many years. I understand that in earlier years some of the fruit and vegetables were brought to the site by rail, but this has reduced. It is likely, therefore, that lorry movements will have increased a little over the years but there has been no expansion of the factory as such since 1964.

It is true that all lorry traffic to/from SUPERIOR has to travel via B1043, either southwards from Godmanchester or northwards from St Neots, as the Class III road linking Offord Cluny and Buckden (and the A1) is subject to width restrictions on the bridges over the River Ouse. A survey of lorry movements on the B1043 between St Neots and Godmanchester has been carried out and from this it should be possible to establish the overall volume of lorry traffic, the extent to which this is generated by business along the route, and the amount which is simply using the road as a "through route" between the two towns.

The analysis of the survey should be completed by the end of this month, and I will then be in a position to comment further on the lorry issue. Dr Echenique has been advised of the survey and I will, of course, be contacting him again when the results are known.

Clearly at this stage it would be premature to comment in detail on the particular weight restriction suggested in Godmanchester, but reference is made to the alternative routes being small country lanes. These roads may also be quite unsuitable for heavy lorries and care must always be taken to ensure that a particular problem is not just being transferred from one road to another.

The suggested new road around the south of Godmanchester and Huntingdon would be a very major project which I am quite sure could not be justified in traffic flow terms. A new link from the A604/A14 Interchange at Godmanchester to the A141 at Hartford was considered in 1980 as a possible option for the east-west bypass of Huntingdon. Investigation showed that the scheme could not be supported on either traffic or economic grounds and the route around the north of the town was preferred.

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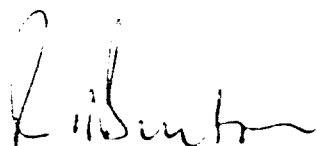
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John Major MP  
14 August 1984

Let me say in conclusion that I do understand the concern felt by Dr Echenique and others in Godmanchester regarding lorry traffic. As you will see, I do question both the accuracy and the interpretation of information in the report submitted but a detailed study of lorry movements on the B1043 has been carried out and this will enable an objective assessment of the problems to be undertaken.

I will keep you informed of my further correspondence with Dr Echenique.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'John Major', written in dark ink.

for Director of Transportation



## FARM HALL

Godmanchester, Cambridgeshire PE18 8HQ  
Telephone 0480-50065

30 August 1984

Mr John Major MP  
House of Commons  
LONDON SW1A 0AA

Dear Mr Major

Thank you for your letter dated 23rd August 1984 and the enclosed copy of a letter from the Director of Transportation, Cambridgeshire County Council. I really appreciate all your efforts concerning the traffic problems of Godmanchester and I am also grateful for the survey of lorry movements conducted by the County. I would be interested in receiving a copy of the analysis when it is completed.

I am, however, concerned by the Director of Transportation's interpretation of some of the points in my report, and I will take this opportunity to clarify them.

- i) I said that there are large benefits accrued by the use of heavy goods vehicles. There are also heavy losses borne by others who may or may not benefit from the increased traffic. This fact is recognised in transport studies and commissions of enquiry into the transport problem. The accusation of 'misplaced logic and quite unrealistic' is therefore nonsense. Furthermore, this is not a theoretical issue, it is of practical significance to me personally, as the listed grade II\* wall in front of my house has been affected by the vibrations caused by lorries. The stone finials on the brick piers have fallen down and the repairs have cost me £5,000. The County Council have contributed a grant of £2,000 towards the cost of the repairs, for which I am grateful, but the remaining £3,000 paid by me may never be recovered despite penny pinching! This is the crux of the problem: the losses suffered by some people are not compensated by the gains of others.
- ii) My complaint against the Government is not particularly directed against the present Government. It is a general comment on the fact that although commissions draw attention to the problem, no authoritative study has been conducted to make recommendations for compensation. I do accept however that there has recently been more positive action to encourage the construction of a by-pass. I am proposing the study of a by-pass in Godmanchester based on this new policy.
- iii) The increase in traffic in Godmanchester is substantial and it can be gauged by observing the queue of traffic in Post Street during the morning peak hour. On completion of the planned new houses, the situation will deteriorate further and another river crossing will be of high priority.

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- 2 -

John Major MP

30 August 1984

- iv) I accept that planning permission for the Superior factory was given by the former Huntingdon County Council and not by the District Council. but this does not alter the fact that it was a bad decision. Contrary to what the Director of Transportation says, the Superior depot has expanded considerably in recent months.

Once again, many thanks for your concern and efforts to improve the situation. I hope you will continue to keep me informed of further developments.

Yours sincerely

M Echenique

CC: Director of Transportation CC  
Director of Planning, Huntingdon District Council  
Huntingdon and Godmanchester Civic Society  
Godmanchester Town Council