

GODMANCHESTER TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD IN THE QUEEN ELIZABETH SCHOOL ON THURSDAY 17 AUGUST 2000

PRESENT: Councillor Mrs LOOKER, Town Mayor
Councillors D COMBEN, P COVINGTON, Mrs FOSTER, A GOFF, R NORRIS,
A SURSHAM, Mrs TYLER, G WILSON
Town Clerk: W D BUTTERWORTH

APOLOGIES: Councillors C VANE PERCY, Mrs MOORE, S SPENCER, A HOOKER,
Mrs HULL, E KYNOCH

PRESENT: One member of the public.

TOWN MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Mayor reported that she had represented the Town on 5 occasions since the last meeting. The Deputy Mayor had represented the Town at 4 events.

The Mayor thanked everyone who had helped with her Charity Wine Tasting evening and announced that £370 had been raised for the Macmillan Nurses Woodlands Centre. She asked that the Council waived the hire fee for the QES Hall that had been used for the event.
AGREED.

All but one of the plastic litter bins on the Recreation Ground had been burnt out by vandals during the previous week. Two lifebuoys had been stolen but had been returned after a few days. The rope from a third lifebuoy had been taken and used to make a swing over the Godmanchester lock. The kissing gate between the lock and Portholme had been smashed. The yellow sign on School Hill, put in place by the police to warn off vandals, had been torched. This last incident had been captured on the CCTV. All the incidents had been reported to the police.

00/060 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 20 July 2000 were APPROVED and signed as an accurate and complete record.

00/061 MATTERS ARISING

The following matters arising from the last meeting were incomplete or required further action:

00/028(8) Fox Grove sub-station – Eastern Electricity had advised that the contract had been let to replace the fence around the sub-station. Work would commence on 17 September 2000

00/043 (Environment) Tree planting – reply awaited from HDC.

00/047 (5) Bid for landfill tax money – the application forms had been received and the Recreation & Amenties WP would take the appropriate action.

00/047 (6) Location for Civic Service 2001 – the Mayor would be making a recommendation.

00/047(29) Yellow lines on Fox Grove – reply awaited from HDC.

00/050 HDC Procedures for the determination of planning applications – reply awaited from CALC.

00/051 (Environment) Litter bins – reply awaited from HDC.

00/051 (Property) External doors for JF – see Property WP report.

00/056(2) Cycling on footpaths – Cllr NORRIS had received a disappointing reply from CCC and the issue would be further progressed in the Environment WP.

00/056(4) Damaged verges at Grove Terrace – decision awaited from HDC.

00/056(5) Church clock – Cllr NORRIS had completed some initial investigations and the matter was referred to the Property WP for a recommendation.

00/057 Financial support to the Twinning Association – see Correspondence Item 1.

00/062 PRESENTATION BY MR T WILLIAMSON

Mr Tim Williamson is the Youth Worker at the Godmanchester Baptist Church and a member of its Gateway Project Team which had been active in Godmanchester for over 3 years. The essence of the project is to discover the needs of the people in the Town and then set about providing the facilities in consultation with a variety of other bodies. Much had been achieved for the young children and for the elderly but there is still a real and urgent need to create facilities for the youth of the Town.

A key element of the project is to gain the trust of the young people and to establish credibility. The team works closely with Margaret Ward and 2 youth workers had spent significant time on the streets of the Town talking to young people and canvassing their views. Task oriented activities and outdoor pursuits were prominent ventures and had proved popular.

The team was preparing a job description for a community worker for Godmanchester. Some Council members shared the view that the main need was for a Youth/Community Centre for all the young people including those who considered themselves marginalized in some way. A Time & Talent Survey was also underway in addition to the recently completed Community Survey.

Councillors applauded the energy and enthusiasm of the team and asked how the Town Council might help. It was suggested that the surveys could go to every home in Godmanchester and so generate a more complete picture. The need for a Drop-In Centre was recognised but the problems of providing a building, staff and fixtures & fittings should not be underestimated. Sufficient qualified and motivated staff, willing to give significant

amounts of time was felt to be the greatest hurdle. Some thought had to be given to short-term, interim solutions.

Finally, Tim provided a written summary of his presentation together with copies of the survey questionnaires and the results of the Community Survey.

00/063 CORRESPONDENCE

The correspondence listed at [Appendix A](#) not covered by the WP reports was addressed. The following was agreed:

1. The Mayor confirmed that Hinchingsbrooke School would be sending a contingent of children to the Sportsfest in Wertheim in September 2000. It was AGREED, therefore, that the Council should provide the financial support to the Twinning Association, namely £1000 for the Sportsfest and £100 for secretarial service support.
2. Cllr Mrs FOSTER volunteered to become the Godmanchester Town Council's representative on the Huntingdon & Godmanchester Road Safety Committee.
3. The Council noted the problems with speeding traffic in St Ann's Lane. The matter was referred to the Environment WP.
4. The Council noted that the CCC inspection of the Chinese Bridge had not revealed any defects.
5. The Council noted the proposal by the Community Association to organise a "Picnic in the Park 2001". However the cost would be significant and the matter was referred to the Finance WP for recommendations.
6. The Council noted the invitation to apply for a grant from the Goodliff Fund. It was suggested that the production of the new Town Guide might be a suitable candidate for an award. The Town Clerk was to display the letter advertising the availability of grants on the Town notice board.

00/064 ACCOUNTS

The accounts set out in Appendix B were APPROVED.

00/065 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.

The Chair of Planning WP had prepared a letter to the Director of Operational Services detailing the Town Council's concerns about the delegated powers for development control and their application in Godmanchester. The letter was APPROVED.

The Chair had also prepared a Statement by the Town Council to the Cambridge to Huntingdon Multi-Modal Study (CHUMMS). Councillors were invited to comment by 25 August 2000 after which the Town Clerk was to dispatch the final version of the document.

00/066 WORKING PARTY (WP) REPORTS

Finance. The WP had met on 1 August 2000 and had made the following recommendations:

The Caretakers' salaries should be increased from £237 to £242 per month with effect from 1 April 2000 in line with the CALC guidelines. AGREED.

The Town Clerk's Assistant's salary should remain at £299 during the probationary period. AGREED.

The Town Clerk's salary should remain unchanged but the supervisory pay should rise by £3.50 per month with effect from 1 April 2000. AGREED.

The money ring-fenced for the upkeep of Devana Park and the associated play equipment should be placed in a separate deposit account. AGREED.

A date stamp should be purchased for recording the date of receipt of letters etc. AGREED. [Town Clerk's note: a date stamp is held in the office and will be used in future]

The WP had queried the rate of subsidy being provided for children at the GMC swimming pool during the Summer. It was unclear whether it was 50 pence or 80 pence. Cllr NORRIS agreed to investigate.

It was believed that HDC would cease to administer the Godmanchester burials from 1 April 2001. The WP was to consider the implications of this decision. [Town Clerk's note: no decision has been made by HDC but a review of the service will start in the near future.]

The organisers of the Picnic in the Park and the Photographic record were thanked for presenting their detailed accounts which were APPROVED.

The WP planned to carry out a detailed review of the cost of the Grounds Maintenance contract within the next 3 months.

Ad Hoc (Gnd Maint). The WP needed to consider the residue of the Agency Agreement functions and prepare a forecast of grounds maintenance expenditure for the rest of the FY. It was DECIDED to continue to display the vacancy notice for a handyman on the Town Council notice board. There would be no closing date for applications.

Environment. Cllr COMBEN provided a written report of the WP meeting held on 8 August 2000. A letter had been sent to HDC and the Freemen of Godmanchester to clarify responsibility for the Lime Trees on The Avenue. The Freemen had provided copies of letters from 1986 indicating that HDC had accepted responsibility and the matter was being dealt with at Pathfinder House.

The appeal to the Secretary of State against the decision by CCC not to approve the footpath around Monks Pit was being prepared.

Cllr COMBEN had agreed to review the Local Waste Plan and prepare a response prior to the deadline of 15 September 2000.

The WP recommended that the trees offered under the Parish Planting Scheme should be used to infill gaps in the London Road cemetery boundary hedge and to provide additional shelter belts within the site. AGREED. Cllr COMBEN would complete the order form to meet the deadline of 15 September 2000.

The WP intended to make proposals for a major renovation of the Garden of Rest.

There was divided opinion on whether to replace all the old lifebuoys on the Recreation Ground with new ones similar to the one by the Chinese Bridge. The Town Clerk was to obtain up-to-date costs for complete units, spare life-belts and installation.

Cllr COMBEN had been re-elected as Chair of the WP

The next meeting would be held at 26 Earning Street on Wednesday, 30 August 2000 at 8 pm.

Recreation and Amenities. The Town Clerk reported on behalf of Cllr SPENCER. The WP had not met but the next meeting would be on Tuesday, 22 August 2000 at JF at 8 pm. HDC had been instructed to proceed with the skatepark after Cllr SPENCER had approved the revised, detailed plan. The application forms for a landfill tax grant from WREN had been received and the WP would discuss what would be the best project to seek funding for. [Note: the meeting was subsequently rearranged for Tuesday, 29 August 2000 at 8 pm in the QES]

Property. The WP had not met. However, HDC had obtained an estimate of £250 for the removal of the septic tanks from the cemetery following the demolition of the mortuary. The cost would be borne by HDC. There was some debate about whether the car park should be reduced in size, resurfaced and provided with some banking. On balance, it was DECIDED to keep the car park at its present size.

A specification and estimate for repairing and reinforcing the 3 external cupboard doors at JF had been received. Cllr HOOKER declared an interest. The quotation in the sum of £195 per door from Heritage Conservatories was ACCEPTED.

The next meeting would be held at Flat 2, 20 Earning Street on Tuesday, 5 September 2000 at 8 pm.

Cemetery. Cllr Mrs FOSTER provided a written report. The WP had identified a serious but highly sensitive problem in that despite the Godmanchester Cemetery having been designated as a lawned cemetery, nearly 40 graves had been turned into flower beds. Various options were considered but it was agreed that the aim should be to restore the cemetery to a fully lawned status over a period of months. The Town Clerk was to write to HDC to ask them to instruct all the undertakers to advise next-of-kin arranging future burials about the regulations pertaining to lawn cemeteries. The WP would identify the graves currently set to flowers and the next-of-kin would be approached individually to agree a transition back to lawn, ideally by April 2001. The Town Council would pay for the work involved. A sign in the cemetery proclaiming its status as a lawned site would also be considered.

The WP had also identified 2 other difficulties. First, the litter bin was nearly always overflowing and, second, the gravediggers shuttering was stored in plain view near the litter bin. The overall result was an unpleasant sight near the entrance. The Town Clerk was to

instruct Fergusons to increase the frequency of emptying the litter bin and was to ask the gravediggers to store their shuttering more discreetly at the side of the cemetery behind the car park.

The next meeting would be held at Flat 2, 20 Earning Street on Tuesday, 5 September 2000 at 8 pm (Combined with the Property WP).

Other Representative Groups. Cllr Mrs TYLER asked if the Twinning Association might use the QES for its meetings during January to April 2001 while the Commemoration Hall was being refurbished. The meetings occurred every 6 weeks and she also asked that the charge for the hall be waived. AGREED.

00/067 CHRISTMAS LIGHTS

It was AGREED that the QES and the Town Hall would be illuminated with Christmas lights as usual. However, it was DECIDED that because the Christmas Tree and its lights were vandalised every year, a different centrepiece was needed. It was AGREED that an illuminated nativity scene in the old porch of the QES would be most appropriate. The Mayor offered to approach the Baptist Church to seek their help in providing the figures and backdrop.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

It had been proposed that the Minutes of Meetings be posted on the notice boards, at the library and on the Internet sooner than at present. The current arrangement was that they were displayed and sent to District and County Councillors after approval at the subsequent Town Council meeting. It would be possible for the Mayor to approve them and for them to be distributed to external addressees a few days after councillors had received their copies.

It was AGREED that in future the Minutes would be approved by the Mayor and circulated to councillors as usual but then published in the public domains 3 working days after councillors had received their copies.

THE NEXT MEETING WILL BE HELD ON 21 SEPTEMBER 2000.

The meeting ended at 10.03 pm Town Mayor