

## **GODMANCHESTER TOWN COUNCIL**

### **MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD IN THE QUEEN ELIZABETH SCHOOL ON THURSDAY 15 MARCH 2001**

**PRESENT:** Councillor Mrs LOOKER, Town Mayor  
Councillors M COHEN, R NORRIS, Mrs MOORE, S SPENCER,  
A SURSHAM, Mrs TYLER, G WILSON  
Town Clerk: W D BUTTERWORTH

**APOLOGIES:** Councillors C VANE PERCY, A HOOKER, D COMBEN (for late arrival),  
A GOFF, Mrs HULL, E KYNOCH (representing the Town Council at CALC)

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Mace Bearer H FOREN

**PRESENT:** No members of the public.

#### **TOWN MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Mayor reported that she had represented the Town on 3 occasions since the last meeting. The Deputy Mayor had represented the Town at 2 events.

There had been yet another window broken at Judith's Field and the roof of the building was strewn with stones. The police and the social / youth workers had been informed and they had agreed to investigate the apparent upsurge in antisocial behaviour in the area.

The Mayor reminded councillors that representatives from Hungary and France would be taking part in the Wertheim Twinning Visit. All councillors were invited to the small reception to be held in the QES at 12.30 pm on 1 April 2001. It was AGREED that the cost of the reception should be met from the Twinning budget.

The Town Meeting would take place on 3 April 2001 in the QES. Councillors were encouraged to advertise the event. The Town Clerk would arrange for details of the meeting to be published in the local newspaper.

Nomination papers for the election of Mayor and Deputy Mayor were handed out. The Mayor asked that completed forms be returned to the Town Clerk by 1 April 2001. Should a poll be necessary, it would be carried out at the April Council Meeting.

HDC had invited all Town Councillors to a meeting in Conference Room 1 at Pathfinder House at 7 pm on Thursday, 22 March 2001 about the major works on the Ring Road. Cllrs SURSHAM & NORRIS volunteered to attend.

The Mayor announced that her Charity Dinner Dance would be held on 27 April and tickets would be £20. She hoped that as many councillors as possible would attend.

The Mace Bearer drew the winner of the Town Survey Prize Draw. The winner was Mrs S Miller of Godmanchester. The Town Clerk was to inform both her and the White Hart.

#### **01/013 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING**

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 15 February 2001 were APPROVED and signed as an accurate and complete record.

Cllr Mrs TYLER arrived at 7.50 pm

### **01/014 MATTERS ARISING**

The Outstanding Actions List dated 14 March 2001 was reviewed. The following matters arising from the last meeting were incomplete or required further action: (actions assigned to WPs are dealt with in the appropriate report).

01/004 - the Town Clerk was to contact Ashley & Foster and seek a quotation for the regular roof maintenance for the Town Hall and the QES.

The Council had noted that the For Sale sign on the pasture land at East Chadley Lane was still in place. The Town Clerk was to remind Smith's Gore to remove it.

Cllr COMBEN arrived at 7.55 pm

### **01/015 CORRESPONDENCE**

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

The Council considered the request from the Diocese of Ely for financial support for the Church Trails Project. It was observed that the project overlapped with the Cambridgeshire Historic Church Trust's initiative and that the Diocese was not itself contributing. Moreover, the Godmanchester Town Council already made significant contributions to the Parish Church and, on balance, it was DECIDED that a further grant would be inappropriate. The Town Clerk was to advise the Diocese.

The Council noted the offer by the Caxton Swing to perform in Godmanchester. The Town Clerk was to pass the details to the Community Association to see if the offer might be incorporated into Gala Week.

Cllr NORRIS reported that a reply was still awaited from CCC about the Bus Strategy. He also reported that Biodiversity and Rights of Way workshop had been well supported and very worthwhile. He had reviewed the Countryside Agency's poster "New Rights, New Responsibilities" which he found to be a valuable guide to the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000. The Town Clerk was to publicise its existence on the Web site and on the notice board. A copy would be held in the Town Office for people to read. Finally, he had attended a meeting about "Shaping the Future of Huntingdonshire" where HDC had laid out the strategic overview on a whole spectrum of issues including transport, education, crime and business. The Town Clerk was to obtain additional copies of the explanatory leaflet.

### **01/016 ACCOUNTS**

The accounts set out in Appendix B were APPROVED.

Cllr NORRIS observed that the litterbin that had been relocated from the end of East Chadley Lane was not in the new position requested by the Council. The Town Clerk explained that

the preferred position had not been acceptable to HDC and a compromise site **had been agreed.**

### **01/017 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.

Each Cllr had received a copy of the Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Structure Plan Review and questionnaire. Cllr WILSON presented a joint Council return and asked that it be approved for submission to CCC. APPROVED.

The amended plans for the proposed development at Rectory Farm were discussed with particular reference to the assertion that the majority of the employees would be able to either walk or cycle to the site and, therefore, not create additional traffic problems. Councillors expressed various degrees of scepticism about employees' willingness to abandon their cars, particularly in bad weather, and noted that employees sometimes needed cars during the working day to make off-site visits. The Town Clerk was to ask HDC planning staff if they were minded to be influenced by the assertion. [HDC recommended that the Town Council writes and expresses its concern]

Cllr WILSON advised the Council that he had recently attended a planning seminar and would make the notes of the meeting available to any councillor who wished to see them.

Cllr SPENCER arrived at 8.45 pm

### **01/018 WORKING PARTY (WP) REPORTS**

**Finance.** The WP had met on 13 March 2001 and had reviewed the hire charges for the halls at JF and the QES. It was recommended that the fees for JF remain unchanged until the building was refurbished. However, the charges for the QES had been held for over 3 years and a modest rise, as detailed at [Appendix D](#), was necessary from 1 April 2001 to ensure that the halls were not run at a loss. Moreover, supplementary changes were proposed for parties and commercial users. All AGREED. It was also AGREED that bookings already prepaid at the old rates would be honoured.

The WP recommended that the cemetery charges be raised by 5% rounded to the £ with effect from 1 April 2001. AGREED.

The WP recommended a number of amendments to the Ground Maintenance contract:

Two treatments of weedkiller per year (May and September) to the gravel car park area in the London Road Cemetery at £35.

Cut the grass area adjacent to Patricia's at a cost of £25.00 for the initial cut and £15 per subsequent cut based on a total of 6 cuts per year

Charge of £1.50 per visit to empty the large litterbin at the cemetery based on 2 visits per week.

Empty the litterbins on the Recreation Ground on a daily basis during the summer period as laid down in the original contract but extended to include April.

£660.00 for the reduction of the height of the hedge between Devana Park and Silver Street. Also the ongoing maintenance of the hedge to the contract based on 2 cuts per year at a charge of 22 pence per square metre

Herbicide maintenance of the shrub beds at Buttermel Meadow at a cost £48.00 per visit (total of 4 beds). In 2001 the first visit should be in July and then monthly until November (total 5 visits). In 2002 the regime should comprise 8 visits from April to November inclusive. The same 8-visit regime should apply to the shrub beds at Devana Park and the Garden of Rest starting in April 2001.

The Town Clerk was to seek a quotation for pruning the shrub beds at Devana Park and for litter picking at JF.

All AGREED.

The WP had considered one quotation for the maintenance of the benches around the Town and the shelter at the Cemetery. The Town Clerk was to seek a second quotation from Fergusons based on the same specification.

#### **Ad Hoc (Gnd Maint).**

It was proposed that the routine work of Ad Hoc (Gnd Maint) WP be transferred to the Environment WP now that the contract had matured. AGREED.

**Environment.** The WP had met on 6 March 2001 but the Chairman noted that it had not been as well supported as he had hoped. Cllr COMBEN provided a detailed written report of the meeting.

The WP would continue to monitor the deterioration of the Old Mill Sluice and recommended that the Town Council continued to press for urgent restoration work.

The Town Clerk was asked to write to HDC to seek further details about the proposed car park under the A14 flyover with particular reference to the proportion that would be available for free public parking. There was also a need to decide how to prevent such a car park becoming a free car park for the railway station.

The WP would draw up a simple Schedule of Works to deal with the storm-damaged trees at the far end of the Recreation Ground.

The WP considered that railings on The Avenue were in need of repair and painting. The Town Clerk was investigating ownership and a reply from the Freeman was awaited.

The site proposed by the Godmanchester Town Council for the air quality monitoring unit had not been acceptable to HDC on grounds of security. The Mayor was investigating an alternative location. The Fina petrol station and the old recycling centre were suggested as other potential locations.

The Mayor was still storing the residual daffodil bulbs from the Millennium project. She agreed to contact Mrs Stokes to see how they could best be used.

The meeting adjourned at 9.20 pm to allow questions from the public

There were 2 proposals:

The Town Clerk was asked to write to Mr S Bond to thank him for all the work he had done in building and maintaining the Godmanchester Website. It was also suggested that as the site was providing a valuable amenity for the Town, Mr Bond might wish to apply for a grant towards the equipment involved. AGREED.

The Town Clerk was asked to write to Mrs Stokes to thank her for the second phase of the Millennium Bulb planting and to tell her how much the plants were appreciated.

The meeting reconvened at 9.25 pm

**Recreation and Amenities.** The WP had met on 8 March 2001. Cllr SPENCER provided a comprehensive written report.

Cllr SPENCER was seeking advice about how to “improve” the Graffiti at the skatepark. The WP had also addressed the problem of litter at the site, flooding on the basketball area and a section of sub-standard tarmac. Proposals for lighting and CCTV to reduce vandalism were being progressed. Cllr SPENCER was seeking quotations for the provision of additional tarmac areas and the WP was considering the merits of providing bench seating. It was hoped to arrange a Skatepark competition during Gala Week

Wicksteed had inspected the 4 play-areas. At JF the entrance had worn away and needed infilling. Minor repairs were needed at Devana Park. No action was needed at the Log site. Work on the Recreation Ground area would be deferred until the results of the WREN application was known. The application to WREN had been submitted on 12 April 2001. The third party bid to HDC had been sent on the same date.

**Property.** The WP had met on 17 February 2001. Cllr SURSHAM reported that they had agreed on the form of both the planning application and the application to the Diocese. The preferred plan was for a wall behind 5 Church Place. The HDC conservation officer had agreed the proposal with a slight amendment, namely that there should be 4 metres of railings before the wall starts. Cllr SURSHAM advised the meeting that it was hoped to obtain a landfill grant towards the cost of the project.

**Cemetery.** The WP had met on 20 February 2001. Cllr COHEN had circulated a written report prior to the meeting. The WP recommended that the draft cemetery regulation be approved with a small amendment to permit small motifs on memorial tablets. AGREED. The WP had considered the cost-effectiveness of a notice board at the cemetery and recommended that one not be provided at the present time. AGREED.

There was considerable discussion about the best way to proceed with the plan to restore the cemetery to a full lawn status. It was AGREED that all the graves would be restored but, in order to allow next-of-kin time to adjust to the change, the work would be deferred until

April 2002. The Town Clerk was to draft a letter to all nexts-of-kin advising them of the decision.

The Council accepted, albeit reluctantly, that HDC would not continue to administer the cemetery in the long-term. Other options were being explored but, in the meantime, the Town Clerk was to write and ask HDC if they would continue the service until 1 April 2002.

The Council considered the long-term capacity of the cemetery. Although, at present usage, it would be many years before it would be filled, the Town Clerk was to write to Mr Probyn at HDC to determine if extra land should be set aside before planning applications were accepted for the areas of land surrounding the existing cemetery.

**Judith's Field.** The next meeting of the WP would be at 8 pm on Wednesday, 28 March 2001 at JF.

**Other Representative Groups.** There were no reports from other representative groups.

#### **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

There was no other business.

**THE NEXT MEETING WILL BE HELD ON 19 APRIL 2001.**

**THE ANNUAL TOWN MEETING WILL BE HELD ON 3 APRIL 2001 - OPEN TO PUBLIC FOR QUESTIONS**

The meeting ended at 10.25 pm Town Mayor