

**GODMANCHESTER TOWN COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD IN THE GODMANCHESTER
TOWN HALL ON THURSDAY 11 DECEMBER 2003**

PRESENT: Mrs A LOOKER Town Mayor

Councillors: D BROWN, H R BUTCHER, M COHEN, A GOFF, E KYNOCH, Mrs B MOORE, R NORRIS, A SURSHAM, G WILSON

Town Clerk: A J WELTON

Mace Bearer: M WILLIAMS

APOLOGIES: W D BUTTERWORTH Deputy Town Mayor, Councillors: D ASHWORTH, Mrs H HULL, C VANE PERCY

ABSENT: Councillor D COMBEN

There were 2 members of the public present.

TOWN MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The MAYOR informed the meeting that she had represented the Town on 8 occasions since the last meeting. The DEPUTY MAYOR had represented the Town on 1 occasion.

Councillors KYNOCH and Mrs MOORE arrived at 7.33pm.

The MAYOR expressed her thanks to those Councillors who had attended the switching on of the Christmas lights and the Carol singing on School Hill. Because of a clash of interests on that night, it had been necessary to cancel the children's party and it was suggested that the event might be held on a Friday or Sunday next time.

The MAYOR also expressed her thanks to the Deputy Mayor and District Councillor Looker for their help in replacing the broken Christmas lights and to the Friends of QES for the decorated Christmas tree in the window of the museum.

03/080 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 20 November 2003 were APPROVED and signed as a complete and accurate record.

03/081 MATTERS ARISING

The Outstanding Actions List dated 11 December 2003 was reviewed.

Cllr NORRIS advised the meeting that there had been no objections to the letters sent out to certain residents concerning the planting of trees on the grass verges and he recommended that planting should proceed in the Spring.

Cllr NORRIS suggested that, now that the renovation of Church Place had been completed, it would be appropriate for the Town Clerk to write a letter of thanks to HDC. Cllr SURSHAM pointed out that the commemorative plaque and the lantern over the gates had still to be put

in place. He also suggested that it might be appropriate to hold another ceremony to commemorate officially the completion of the project.

03/082 CORRESPONDENCE

The correspondence listed at Appendix A, not covered by the WP reports, was addressed.

The Town Clerk was to write to CALC advising them that meetings of the Huntingdon District Association always seemed to be held on the third Thursday of a month and this clashed with Godmanchester Town Council meetings, precluding the attendance of those Town Councillors who were members of the Association.

The Town Clerk was to write to the Environment Agency welcoming their proposed study into the Godmanchester Flood Alleviation Scheme and pointing out the long standing problems associated with the Old Mill Sluice, the railings around the sluice, the condition of the other weirs and pointing out that there would be much anecdotal history of flooding in Godmanchester, particularly the 1947 flood.

03/083 S137 GRANTS

The Town Council considered the following grant applications and APPROVED the amounts indicated:

Godmanchester Football & Sports Association Trust: deferred until January 2004 to allow for the production of the latest set of accounts for perusal by the Council.

Godmanchester Community Association: £6700 for Picnic in the Park 2004.

Godmanchester Senior Citizens Club: £1000 for the purchase of new chairs in the Club.

Open Spaces Society: £50

Huntingdonshire Citizens Advice Bureaux: the MAYOR and Cllr KYNOCH expressed an interest and left the meeting during discussion of this application. £500 was granted.

1st Godmanchester Ranger Unit: as the request was for sponsorship of four individuals, the rules preclude making a grant under this section of the Local Government Act.

Hinchingbrooke Keyhole Appeal: after much discussion, a sum of £400 was agreed.

The Town Clerk was to write to all applicants advising them of the Council's decision.

03/084 ACCOUNTS

The accounts set out in Appendix B were APPROVED. The Town Clerk advised that the Internal Auditor had carried out the independent audit of accounts for the Financial Year 2002/2003 and read out the comments that would be submitted to the external auditors. He also advised that the Internal Auditor had recommended that the Town Clerk should approach other councils of similar size to determine what standing orders and risk assessment documentation they held.

The Town Clerk was to write a letter of thanks to the Internal Auditor for his work in completing the accounts for presentation to the External Auditors.

03/085 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.

Referring to the letter from HDC concerning the replacement of windows in Oak Tree Court that they had refused, Cllr COHEN pointed out that the windows in The Chestnuts had been replaced with white UPVC style windows and said that he did not recall seeing a planning application. It was DECIDED that the Town Clerk would write to HDC seeking confirmation that there had been a planning application for The Chestnuts and if so asking why the application for Oak Tree Court had been refused.

03/086 WORKING PARTY (WP) REPORTS

Cemetery. The Town Clerk was to hasten Fergusons to start the final phase of lawning the Cemetery. Town Clerk's Note : Fergusons expect to start work on 15 December 2003.

Environment. There had been no WP meeting but the Town Council was asked to agree some expenditure with Ashley & Foster. To replace the two missing seat slats in hardwood on School Hill was estimated at £94.00 + VAT. APPROVED. To replace the two missing seat slats to the seat on the footpath beside the river was estimated to cost £128.00 +VAT. APPROVED. Other estimates were deferred for discussion at the next WP meeting.

Cllr NORRIS referred to the letter from Fergusons in which they had pointed out that they had previously been required to redecorate the 20 various benches and the Cemetery shelter. The cost of each bench would be £26.00 and the shelter would cost £125.00. These amounts were APPROVED. Cllr NORRIS also reported that the willows on East Chadley Lane had been pollarded.

The next Environment WP would be held on Tuesday 6 January 2004 in the Town Hall, starting at 8.00pm.

Finance. There had been no meeting of the WP and one was not anticipated prior to the next Town Council meeting.

Flood Defences. There had been no meeting of the WP and one was not anticipated prior to the next Town Council meeting.

Property/Judith's Field. Cllr GOFF reported that installation of the final light in the skate park area was still awaited. The Town Clerk advised that the central heating boiler in the building had stopped working and that an engineer had been called. If a replacement was required the Town Council APPROVED the expenditure of up to £1600.00. Town Clerk's Note: The boiler is sound; a replacement thermocouple, together with a new protective grille over the external flue, was all that was required.

Cllr SURSHAM reported that he was still awaiting quotations from potential contractors for the work on the replacement gates for the churchyard.

The meeting was adjourned at 9.00pm to allow questions from the public.

Mr Colin Hyams asked, in the light of comments about risk management, what arrangements were in place for the archiving of electronic information. The response was that work would be saved on removable electronic recordable media and stored in a separate building.

Cllr SURSHAM pointed out that the footpath along the river frontage was in a state of disrepair. The matter had been brought to the attention of HDC and investigated by Cllr NORRIS but had fallen by the wayside during the foot and mouth crisis. District Councillor Looker offered to take the matter up with the responsible officer at HDC.

District Councillor Looker then mentioned a number of matters of moment:

- 1.He had taken issue with the HDC points system in use for determining the awards in applications for Small Scale Environmental Improvements which did not give sufficient weight to areas currently in a poor condition. He asked the Town Council to consider suggesting areas on older estates in the Town for future proposed Improvement Schemes.
- 2.Following a number of complaints from local residents, he had made enquiries about the removal of the bund at the Roman Way residential development site. The developers had been instructed to ensure that the bund is reinstated after completion.
- 3.The Local Development Framework (previously known as the Local Plan) would be divided into separate topic documents that would not necessarily have to be dealt with all at the same time. Further information on this subject could be found on the ODPM website.

There was some concern expressed about the proposed use of Huntingdon bus station for building development.

The meeting reconvened at 9.20pm.

The MAYOR advised that SITA and the Community Safety Partnership had given approval for full funding of the Youth Shelter that was to be sited at Judith's Field. The Town Council APPROVED the installation.

Other Representative Groups/Twinning/Inter Town Forum/Detached Youth Initiative.

Cllr NORRIS advised that he had attended a meeting of the Cambs' Police Authority Local Consultation Group – Huntingdon Sector and had offered Godmanchester as a possible venue for their meeting in April 2004. Town Clerk's Note: The small hall in QES had been booked for Thursday 15 April 2004 from 7.30 – 9.30pm but, as this clashed with a Town Council meeting, a provisional booking for the same time and venue had been made for Tuesday 13 April 2004. This was to be confirmed.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS.

Cllr KYNOCH had intended to speak about the gradual creeping reduction in car parking space availability in Godmanchester, particularly with the introduction of double yellow lines in Chadley Lane, Orchard Way and Linden Grove, and its effect on the car parking space available along The Causeway but had decided not to proceed.

Cllr BROWN raised the issue of shrubbery overgrowing a boundary wall and partially obscuring the benefit of a street light shining along The Stiles, towards New Street. The Town Clerk was to write to HDC to get the overgrowth cut back.

Cllr NORRIS advised that the ringing chamber floor of the parish church had death-watch beetle and that, in order to treat it, it would be necessary for the church clock mechanism to be removed. This would cost approximately £2000.00. The Town Clerk reminded the Town Council that they could not vote expenditure under Any Other Business and it was DECIDED that the matter would be discussed at the next Environment WP meeting and included in the agenda for the next Town Council meeting.

The MACE BEARER thanked the Town Council for paying the membership subscription to The Guild of Mace Bearers.

THE NEXT COUNCIL MEETING WILL BE HELD ON 15 January 2004

The meeting ended 9.36 pm Mayor