

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD IN THE GODMANCHESTER TOWN HALL ON THURSDAY 23 SEPTEMBER 2004

PRESENT: W D BUTTERWORTH Town Mayor, M COHEN Deputy Town Mayor
Councillors: D BROWN, H R BUTCHER, J COXHEAD, Mrs C A GODLEY, L
HOLGATE, Mrs H HULL, C R HYAMS, E KYNOCH, Mrs A M LOOKER, Mrs B
MOORE
Town Clerk: A J WELTON
Mace Bearer: M WILLIAMS

APOLOGIES: Councillors: R COXHEAD, A GOFF

ABSENT: Councillor: C VANE PERCY

There were 2 members of the public present.

04/063 PRESENTATION ON TRAFFIC CALMING

Introducing the visiting speaker, the Mayor reminded the council that their priorities and opinions had been agreed and forwarded prior to the meeting. Ms Emma Murden from Cambridgeshire County Council, West Highways Division, presented the latest situation concerning traffic calming measures to be introduced in Godmanchester. She had produced a matrix of the various road schemes in order of priority as notified by the Town Council and following the public presentation. Each provision was discussed by the Town Council and, apart from some personal misgivings from individual Cllrs, the recommendations were APPROVED, subject to the publication of the various Statutory Notices and reference to the Area Joint Committee of any objections. This process was likely to take place in November.

Ms Murden advised that those who wanted to see the detailed plans for the various schemes to be introduced could view the drawings at HDC.

The Town Clerk was to write formally to Ms Murden accepting the recommendations and asking the West Highways Division to proceed.

TOWN MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The MAYOR advised that he had represented the Town on 9 occasions since the last Town Council meeting and the DEPUTY MAYOR had represented the Town on 1 occasion.

The MAYOR expressed his thanks to those Cllrs that had been able to support him at the Civic Service. It had been a great success.

He reminded all Town Councillors that the Town Clerk was going into hospital on 27 September and that he would be away from work for some time. The Town Council wished the Town Clerk a speedy recovery. As a result of the Town Clerk's absence, the MAYOR therefore advised that it was his intention that the October meeting should be minimalist and anything that could be deferred to November was to be deferred. In the light of this suggestion the MAYOR asked for approval for the Town Clerk's Assistant to take the minutes at the October meeting and for approval for an extra payment equivalent to 5 hours

to cover her travelling time and the Town Council meeting. APPROVED. He further asked for support for the Town Office during the Town Clerk's absence.

The MAYOR announced that he would be away on holiday from 25 September to 2 October inclusive during which time mayoral matters were to be referred to the DEPUTY MAYOR .

04/064 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 19 August 2004 were APPROVED and signed as a complete and accurate record.

04/065 MATTERS ARISING

The Outstanding Actions List dated 19 August 2004 was reviewed. Following on from last month's meeting, ratification of the Financial Regulations was APPROVED. The MAYOR recorded his thanks to Cllr Mrs MOORE for her hard work in finalising this matter.

The matter of the lease of the Town Hall by the Godmanchester Senior Citizens' Club was discussed. Cllr Mrs LOOKER had prepared a list of items that should be considered and, following discussion of the proposed amendments to the lease, it was AGREED that the Town Clerk should write to the Senior Citizens' Club outlining the proposed amendments for their agreement before submitting the lease to the Solicitor.

The MAYOR advised that the front step to the Town Hall was no longer wobbly having been repaired by Cllr BUTCHER, to whom thanks were expressed.

04/069 DISTRICT COUNCIL REPORTS

At the request of Cllr Mrs GODLEY, who had other business elsewhere, this item was brought forward so that she could excuse herself from the rest of the meeting. AGREED.

Cllr Mrs GODLEY announced that the Police Sector Commander, Inspector Laura Hunt, was leaving the district on 24 September and would be replaced by Inspector Lunn on 27 September 2004.

Cllr Mrs GODLEY advised that the road behind Cambridge Villas, between there and Meadow Way/Anderson Crescent/Kisby Avenue, had been proposed for landscaping and the introduction of street lighting. At a residents' meeting on 22 September 2004, the residents had been advised that if they accepted the likely cost would be between £300 and £500 each but it was possible that grants would be available.

Cllr HYAMS advised that the subject of the gate between St Germain Street and the High Street in Huntingdon continued to be an emotive subject with residents. Many residents had also expressed their concern at the incidence of vandalism. Cllr HYAMS had ascertained that part of the problem arose from the knock-on effects of the Soham murder case that had left the Cambridgeshire Constabulary with a shortfall of some £8 million in their funding.

Cllr Mrs GODLEY left the meeting at 8.45pm.

04/066 CORRESPONDENCE

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

The MAYOR referred Cllrs to the résumé he had sent them all concerning the correspondence received from the Parochial Church Council dealing with the non-conformist burial ground. Following discussion, it was recommended that the Town Council should take no further action. It was for the Trustees to decide what to do. The Town Clerk was to acknowledge receipt of the various items of correspondence, reiterating that the Town Council's position remained unchanged. Additionally, the Town Clerk was to ask for the names and addresses of the Trustees. AGREED.

The meeting was adjourned at 9.00pm to allow questions from the public but as there were none, the meeting reconvened at 9.01pm.

Discussing the correspondence on Access for All, the MAYOR advised that sourcing of a suitable lightweight ramp for negotiating the Town Hall steps was being investigated and the provision of a low-level bell to enable staff to be summoned was also being examined.

04/067 ACCOUNTS

The accounts set out in Appendix B were APPROVED.

04/068 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 Town Clerk advised that the next WP meeting would be held in the small hall of QES on Thursday 14 October 2004 starting at 7.30pm.

04/070 WORKING PARTY (WP) REPORTS

CHUMMS and A14. There was nothing to report.

Cemetery. The DEPUTY MAYOR, in his capacity as Chair of the Cemetery WP, advised that the 2 grave spaces that had been giving cause for concern have now complied with the request to remove the various ephemera and have also turfed their respective grave areas. There are now a number of grave areas that have settled and are ready for turfing. The Town Clerk was to write to the grounds maintenance contractor to carry out the work.

The MAYOR pointed out that there were still some items, stored in QES, that had been removed from the cemetery over a year ago and, following brief discussion, it was DECIDED that they should be retained for one more year.

Environment. Cllr BUTCHER advised that the Devana Close Play Area had been subjected to an arson attack and that both the Fire Service and the Police had attended. The incident had been given Crime Number CF 0371010904 and the Police had asked for details of the cost of the damage. Wicksteed, as play equipment specialists, had been invited to inspect the damage and report back to the Town Council. Their recommendation had been that the tunnel should be removed and the remaining equipment made safe but that they would not be prepared to carry out the work. It was DECIDED that the Town Clerk should approach Anglian

Playground Services, who had recently refurbished the equipment, to ask them to quote for the installation of a replacement tunnel or to make alternative recommendations.

Following the earlier decision to install appropriate cycle racks on the car park at QES, HDC had been contacted but Cllr BUTCHER was still awaiting an on-site visit.

Discussing the extension of the double yellow lines at the corner of Park Lane and Post Street, Cllr BUTCHER reported that a reply had been received from the HDC Planning Enforcement Officer that indicated that there was no breach of planning control at the caravan park. Consequently, there were no grounds for the Town Council to object. Individual objections could be submitted following publication of the Statutory Notice of the intention to extend the lines.

The bridleway from Cow Lane to Hemingford Grey was being upgraded as part of the Sustrans cycle route. Work had started on 23 August and was expected to last for about 9 weeks.

It had been reported, by a number of individuals, that vandals had removed an 18 inch section of the railings between the churchyard and the Community School. There was no trace of the remnants. As the railings were not Town Council property, it was decided that no further action would be taken at this time.

HDC had held a meeting for Town Councillors to brief them on the introduction of the new re-cycling regime about to be introduced to Godmanchester. Unfortunately, the invitations had arrived too late for anyone to take up the offer. However, HDC was positioning a "Roadshow" trailer, open to the public, in the QES car park on Wednesday 29 September 2004, from 9.30am to 4.30pm. Additionally, all householders would receive an explanatory leaflet prior to introduction of the new system.

Cllr BUTCHER advised that he had received advice from the grounds maintenance contractor that, because of the variations in the weather this year had seen an exceptional growing season and they advised that there would be a need for additional grass cuts. The additional cost would be £445.04. APPROVED.

There was a large branch that had broken off a willow tree on the riverside adjacent to the Play Area in the Recreation Ground. It was a danger to users of the area and it was recommended that it should be removed. The Town Clerk was to approach the grounds maintenance contractor to deal with the matter.

It was reported that the litterbin next to the Chinese Bridge had not been emptied for 3 days. The Town Clerk was to ask HDC to ensure that it was emptied daily.

Finance. Cllr Mrs MOORE advised that there had been a WP meeting on 7 September at which the details of the Financial Regulations had been finalised and which the Town Council had ratified earlier. Other matters still to be finalised were Financial Risk Management guidelines and supplementary regulations. It had been previously DECIDED that the DEPUTY MAYOR would copy the Burial Records to a spreadsheet and that electronic records would be copied to CD and stored elsewhere than in the Town Office. Records such as the VAT, Payroll and Audit documents, that did not lend themselves to being held elsewhere, would be stored in a fireproof safe. The Town Clerk had identified a

suitable container that was available from Viking Direct at a cost of £199.99 and this sum was APPROVED.

Cllr Mrs MOORE was still working on the production of relevant Standing Orders. She would produce an electronic copy that would be circulated by e-mail. It was DECIDED that these Standing Orders would be discussed in November and ratified in December.

Flood Defences. There was nothing to report.

Property/Judith's Field. The Chair of the WP was not present but the Town Clerk reported that vandals had removed the lighting sensor and one of the exterior lights on the front of the Judith's Field building. The electrical contractor had been requested to replace them.

Cllr HYAMS asked if it would be possible to produce a breakdown of costs incurred in repairs caused by vandalism. The Town Clerk was to provide the detail at the November meeting.

Health & Safety. Although the Chair of the WP was not present, the MAYOR advised that he understood that a report was being prepared for circulation to all Cllrs.

Other Representative Groups/Twinning/Inter Town Forum/Detached Youth Initiative. The MAYOR reminded Cllrs that he had circulated a copy of his notes from the Twinning meeting that he and Cllr Mrs LOOKER had attended.

Cllr Mrs LOOKER, together with the Town Clerk, had attended the Inter Town Forum meeting in Ramsey on 21 September 2004. There had been poor representation from the other towns. The agenda had been brief, discussing the maintenance and management of Public Conveniences, S106 Agreements and the sponsorship of roundabouts and traffic islands.

Cllr Mrs HULL advised that she had been in contact with Steph Webb and it had emerged that there was a growing perception that the provision of a Youth Club/Drop-in Centre at Judith's Field was urgently needed. There would be a meeting to discuss this in the 1st week in November. It was AGREED that Cllr J COXHEAD should attend. Following that meeting a proposal would be presented and discussed at the November Town Council meeting.

Cllr Mrs LOOKER had e-mailed a copy of the report from the HCSP Problem Solving Group meeting to all. The introduction of the "Live the Dream" scheme had been postponed because the proposed launch date had been on the same date as the Muir Group AGM and would be re-arranged for another time. It was AGREED that Cllr Mrs LOOKER would write to the Muir Group to encourage regeneration of the scheme.

Cllr KYNOCH advised that the first joint CALC/HDC liaison meeting was due to take place on 28 September 2004 and that he would be attending.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS. The Town Clerk reported problems with both CCTV cameras on the Town Hall. The matter of repair was referred to the Property WP.

Cllr Mrs LOOKER reported that as a result of the Countryside Access scheme, it had been suggested that Portholme Meadow, East Side Common and West Side Common would be opened up to the public but this had not yet been ratified.

Cllr Mrs HULL reported that there appeared to be some people camping in the osiers off the footpath to Godmanchester Lock. The Town Clerk undertook to initiate the appropriate action.

Town Clerk's Note: Both the local Police and the HDC Environmental Health Enforcement Officer have been notified and undertook to investigate.

The Town Clerk reminded all Cllrs that the Town Council had tasked him with producing details of the Council's Investment regime, supported by up-to-date balances of all the accounts operated. Those details were produced for perusal.

THE NEXT COUNCIL MEETING WILL BE HELD ON 21 OCTOBER 2004.

The meeting ended 10.30pm Mayor