

## **MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD IN THE GODMANCHESTER TOWN HALL ON THURSDAY 21 OCTOBER 2004**

**PRESENT:** W D BUTTERWORTH Town Mayor, M COHEN Deputy Town Mayor  
Councillors: H R BUTCHER, J COXHEAD, A GOFF, C R HYAMS, E KYNOCH, Mrs A  
M LOOKER, Mrs B MOORE,

Town Clerk's Assistant: Miss P M NICOL

**APOLOGIES:** Councillors: C VANE PERCY, L HOLGATE, Mrs C A GODLEY, D  
BROWN. Cllr Mrs H HULL was absent representing the Town Council at another meeting.

There were no members of the public present.

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

The MAYOR advised the Council that he had represented the Town on 8 occasions since the last Town Council meeting and the DEPUTY MAYOR had represented the Town on 1 occasion.

The Mayor announced that Cllr Roger Coxhead had tendered his resignation from the Town Council. HDC had been informed, the statutory notice was on display and it was anticipated that the Council would be allowed to co-opt a new member on 1 November 2004.

The Mayor thanked all the councillors who had been able to help in ways large and small during the Town Clerk's absence.

He announced that he had approved the expenditure of £175 for the stripping and re-varnishing of the older door of the QES to make it match the new one. It was necessary to preserve the appearance of the building and needed to be done before the winter weather set in. APPROVED

He further advised that the sum of £415 had been authorised for the replacement of the 2 bollards at JF that had been destroyed by vandals. APPROVED

Emergency repairs to the play equipment at DP had also been authorised. The final bill had been £445. APPROVED

### **04/071 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING**

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 23 September 2004 were APPROVED and signed as a complete and accurate record.

### **04/072 MATTERS ARISING**

The Outstanding Actions List dated 23 September 2004 was reviewed.

The work on the Town Hall lease was still being progressed by the Town Clerk.  
The requirement to replace the bark at Devana Park play area was cancelled.  
The work on the willow trees was complete – item closed.

#### **04/073 CORRESPONDENCE**

The correspondence listed at Appendix A, not covered by the WP reports, was addressed. The following observations were made;

The Mayor reminded councillors of the need to wear gowns for the Remembrance Day Service at the War Memorial on 14 November 2004.

The Mayor had completed the questionnaire about Bus Services for 2005 after seeking the views of a cross-section of people.

The various letters related to Community Safety and youth matters, which had been referred to Cllr Mrs Hull, were deferred to her report at the next meeting.

The return requested by CCC relating to facilities in GMC had been completed.

The Mayor agreed to complete the questionnaire about the new Licensing Policy. He was asked to include a proposal to the effect that the Town Council should have the opportunity to make recommendations about proposed licensing applications in the same way as it did with planning applications.

#### **04/074 ACCOUNTS**

The accounts set out in Appendix B were APPROVED.

#### **04/075 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.

There was some discussion about 0401088/FUL, a proposal for the construction of a path for pedestrians, cyclists and wheelchairs starting at The Avenue. GTC had recommended approval of the proposal in April 2004 but the matter was now before HDC following a petition from local residents and wider concerns about the suitability of some sections of the route. These concerns had not been submitted to the Town Council in April. It was AGREED that GTC would stand by its original recommendation until such time as it received either a petition or was presented with new information. In the meantime, it was understood that HDC officers planned to walk the whole route before considering the matter again.

Copies of the Design Strategy for the Land West of Ermine Street, Huntingdon and the Planning Brief for the Land at Chequers Court, Huntingdon were provided by Cllr HYAMS and would be made available in the Town Office.

Cllr J COXHEAD left the meeting at 8.30 pm.

#### **04/076 DISTRICT COUNCIL REPORTS**

Cllr HYAMS reported that Central Government was redefining "East of England", formally Cambs, Norfolk & Suffolk, to include Essex, Beds & Herts. The implications of this change were yet to be fully understood.

Some residents had complained that a small green space in Bluegate was being used as a play area. Investigations had revealed that it had not been adopted by HDC when the roads were adopted – HDC would resolve this. Moreover, there was no bye-law preventing ball games on the grass.

Cllr HYAMS advised the meeting that he had an appointment with the Chief Constable of Cambs. If any councillor has an issue they would like raised with the CC they should contact Cllr HYAMS asap.

## **04/077 WORKING PARTY (WP) REPORTS**

**CHUMMS and A14.** Nothing to report.

**Cemetery.** Cllr COHEN requested that Breheny be invited to specify and quote for the work necessary to tarmac the car parking area in the cemetery.

All the glass in the shelter had been smashed. It was DECIDED to replace it with wooden panels. The Town Clerk was to task a suitable carpenter.

Cllr COHEN reported that the final 2 graves had been restored to “lawn” status. Seven recent graves were ready for turf – the contractor had been tasked to carry out the work.

It was noted that the spoil pile was growing again. The gravedigger had indicated that for various reason he could not remove it. The Town Clerk was to contact the undertakers again and determine the way ahead.

**Environment.** Cllr BUTCHER provided a written report. In summary, the DP play area had been made safe after the recent damage at a cost of £445. The future of the facility would be discussed at the next WP meeting. The broken branches from the willow trees adjacent to the play area by the river had been removed. HDC had been asked to clear the footpath between Brick Kilns and Ferndown Drive. An investigation had revealed that it was the responsibility of the developers and HDC would take appropriate steps to have it cleared. A request had been received to have the metal benches on The Avenue repaired or replaced; this would be considered by the WP. The bench by the War Memorial had been damaged and repair was in hand. Zurich Insurance had carried out an investigation into the recent incident at the Logworld play area. The report was awaited. The Environment Agency would be repairing the 2 weirs between GMC sluice and GMC lock in the near future. At the same time the 2 bridges would be removed, restored and made more childproof. HDC had expressed its thanks for GTC support for the Recycling Roadshow on 29 September 2004.

**Finance.** The next meeting of the Finance WP would be at 8 pm on Wednesday, 10 November 2004 at Cllr Mrs MOORE’s house. It would be a combined with a meeting of the Environment WP. Chairs of all WPs were asked to send their spending plans for 04/05 to Cllr Mrs MOORE before the meeting to allow her to build the budget and determine the precept for next year.

**Flood Defences.** Nothing to report. However, it was noted that the Environment Agency’s new flood prediction maps were now available on its website.

**Property/Judith’s Field.** Cllr GOFF proposed that a doorbell be fitted to the Town Hall at a suitable height to allow people in wheelchairs to call for service or assistance. The Mayor confirmed that an estimate for the work had been requested. Cllr GOFF also proposed that up to £1,200 be made available for portable ramps for the Town Hall to facilitate wheelchair

access. AGREED. A demonstration of the equipment would be arranged before an order was placed. It was further proposed that a no parking area be created outside the Town Hall door either by additional bollards or painted signs. AGREED.

The work to repair the roof and gutter at JF was overdue and the Town Clerk was to seek a quotation from another company. Cllr GOFF reported that the new heavy-duty bollards would be installed during the week starting 25 October 2004. The work on the new kickwall would be completed at the same time. Cllr GOFF thanked Cllr BUTCHER for his help in overseeing the work. Care was being taken to remove combustible material from JF to discourage arsonists. Cllr COHEN asked if there had been any progress with the plan to replace the chairs in QES. As yet no suitable type had been identified but Cllr Mrs LOOKER was pursuing the matter.

The meeting discussed the merits of the draft flyer aimed at encouraging towns-people to report crime and anti-social behaviour to the police. The draft received a mixed reception from councillors. Cllr Mrs LOOKER provided a comprehensive written report of the recent meeting of the GMC Problem Solving Group that included a detailed assessment of the draft flyer by members of the multi-disciplined group who, collectively, felt unable to support it. Overall the Town Council AGREED the flyer needed to be more balanced in its description of the problems in GMC. It should address the positive initiatives that are ongoing and should emphasise how people can report incidents to the police in confidence. It was acknowledged that fear of retaliation from offenders was the greatest deterrent to ringing the police. It was also AGREED that the redrafted flyer would best be distributed under the GTC logo rather than the NHW logo. Councillors were asked to send their suggested amended texts to Cllr GOFF for inclusion in the next draft.

**Health & Safety.** The Mayor reported that he had written to ex-Cllr Roger Coxhead to ask him for the report on the H&S work to date. The Mayor pointed out that a new Chair was needed for the H&S WP and hoped that a councillor would volunteer for the post.

**Other Representative Groups/Twinning/Inter Town Forum/Detached Youth Initiative.** The Mayor had attended a meeting of the Twinning Association and had provided a short written report to all Councillors. The HGTA would be seeking a renewal of GTC's financial support to cover the period up FY 07/08.

Cllr Mrs LOOKER's report from the Problem Solving Group (mentioned above) gave an update on the "Live the Dream" project, which was still seeking more volunteers to undergo the free training. The report also covered the video project, the proposal to have a Youth Club at JF, Connections and Natural High that is funding activities at the Grafham water sports centre.

**ANY OTHER BUSINESS.** There was no other business to discuss.

**THE NEXT COUNCIL MEETING WILL BE HELD ON 18 NOVEMBER 2004.**

The meeting ended at 9.45 pm Mayor