

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD IN THE GODMANCHESTER TOWN HALL ON THURSDAY 16 OCTOBER 2008

PRESENT: G WILSON Town Mayor,

Councillors: D BROWN, H R BUTCHER, M COHEN Deputy Town Mayor, Mrs C DUTTON, J DUTTON, C R HYAMS, Mrs A M LOOKER, Ms D MIDDLETON, N WELLS

Town Clerk: Mrs M LIDDIARD

APOLOGIES: Cllrs: M DOBBIE, Mrs H HULL, C RICHARDSON, M RZYMEK, C VANE PERCY

ABSENT: Cllr T CANT

1 member of the public was present

08/88 CO-OPTION OF TOWN COUNCILLOR

MRS SUSAN WORTHINGTON read and signed her Declaration of Acceptance of Office. THE MAYOR welcomed her to the Town Council.

CLLR MRS DUTTON advised that due to a change in her circumstances she was resigning from her position as Town Councillor. Town Clerk would advise HDC and display necessary notices. THE MAYOR thanked CLLR MRS DUTTON for the advice and support she had provided in the short time she had been a member.

08/89 MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

THE MAYOR reported he had represented the Town on 13 occasions and the DEPUTY MAYOR had represented the Town on 1 occasion since the last meeting.

THE MAYOR thanked everyone who had attended the Civic Service. It was a glorious day and many of the guests had enjoyed their food and drink outside. The next Civic event would be Remembrance Day. THE MAYOR advised there would be two services held on Sunday 9th November. For the morning service, Cllrs meet at the Town Hall at 10.30am and process along Post Street to the War Memorial for laying of wreaths and a short service. The evening service is held in the Parish Church at 6.30pm and Cllrs and partners are invited to attend. THE MAYOR reminded all that these Civic events are an opportunity for the residents of Godmanchester to see their Town Council and where possible Cllrs were asked to put their personal views or beliefs aside in order to represent their town.

THE MAYOR advised he and The Mayoress had visited Szentendre for a cultural twinning event and had been warmly welcomed. The young people from Hinchingsbrooke and St Peter's schools had been a credit to Godmanchester and Huntingdon. THE MAYOR was pleased to present CLLR HYAMS with a plate, created by CLLR HYAMS during his visit to Szentendre in February this year.

THE MAYOR thanked everyone who had bought tickets for the Wine Tasting Evening to be held on 18th October in aid of The Richmond Fellowship. For those unable to come, he advised there would be further opportunities to support his chosen charity by purchasing tickets for a musical evening to be held in March 2009 and he also advised the Mayoress would be organising a Civic dinner at a local venue, details to be confirmed.

THE MAYOR reported that the Town Clerk had requested assistance to sort out the paperwork stored in the QES. It was currently not stored in a way that would allow easy retrieval of any documents and much was outdated and could be disposed of. The Town Clerk had suggested we approach the former Town Clerk who had a good working knowledge of items stored and who would be capable of sifting through the contents to establish what should be kept. It is anticipated this project would take up to 3 months to complete with one person working 3 hours a day. Details of remuneration to be discussed and put forward for approval, but it was AGREED to progress this matter.

THE MAYOR suggested that CLLR MRS WORTHINGTON take on responsibility for property matters which she confirmed she was happy to do. As CLLR MRS DUTTON had advised of her resignation, CLLR BUTCHER AGREED to take on inspection of Play Areas until such time as another Cllr was appointed. With particular knowledge of Tourism, CLLR MRS WORTHINGTON also AGREED to join the working group who are considering how we mark 2012.

THE MAYOR advised that there would be a GMCinB open meeting on Thursday 23 October in the QES when a RSPB speaker would give a talk about encouraging birds into our gardens.

THE MAYOR advised that the Town Clerk would be working in excess of the agreed 10 hours overtime on top of her monthly contracted hours, in order to undertake urgent work on the Fire Risk Assessment. It was AGREED that payment for up to 20 hours extra could be made if the hours were worked during the preparation of the FRA.

THE MAYOR advised there would be a Finance Working Party meeting held on Thursday 30th October to discuss the budget and precept request for 2009/2010. All chairs of working parties would need to submit their budget requests to CLLR RZYMEK for inclusion in the draft budget.

A reminder that the Environment Agency would be holding a Public Exhibition on Friday 31st October in the QES to present suggested schemes and options for flood defences for The Causeway. The exhibition would be open to the public from 10am – 3pm and from 5pm – 9.30pm. Everyone is invited to attend and to express their views.

08/90 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of the meeting held on 18th September 2008 were APPROVED and signed as a complete and accurate record.

08/91 MATTERS ARISING

CLLR BROWN confirmed discussions regarding an angled flower bed were continuing with HDC and the Regional College.

The survey report on the state of repair of the Chinese Bridge had been provided but a timescale for necessary works was still awaited. CLLR HYAMS and CLLR DUTTON would continue to hasten this matter.

CLLR MRS LOOKER, CLLR VANE PERCY and David Stokes had met and discussed the quotes received in respect of managing the project to clean the Town Hall. It was AGREED

to appoint Donald Insall (Architects) to undertake the inspection and preparation of the specification of works in the first instance. The information provided would then be reviewed with the option to take the project forward in stages. Town Clerk would discuss this decision with the Architects, and confirm our instructions in writing.

CLLR BROWN confirmed the 1604 charter and 1212 charter were now ready for hanging in the QES. It was AGREED the best position would be in the large hall on either side of the Porch Museum doorway. It was also AGREED that as the translation for the 1604 charter is more than 20 pages long, it would not be appropriate to print and frame the translation. It was AGREED that it would be printed in a suitable typeface and made into a book which would be available in the QES on Civic occasions at when the museum is open to the public. CLLR BROWN to liaise with CLLR HYAMS.

CLLR BROWN confirmed the work to repaint the railings along The Avenue was nearing completion. Town Clerk would write to thank the Community Service team for their hard work. CLLR BROWN was also sincerely thanked for his involvement in every aspect of this project.

08/92 2012

CLLR MRS LOOKER reported that 25 people had attended the public meeting held on 9th October and several suggestions had been put forward. No date had been put forward for the next meeting yet, but a further update would be provided for the next Town Council newsletter.

08/93 JUDITH'S FIELD FACILITIES

CLLR MS MIDDLETON and CLLR RZYMEK had put together a good display for their part of the public meeting on 9th October to consider future facilities for Judith's Field. A group of 8 young people had stayed quite a while and read a lot of the information provided. So far the responses received indicate a multisport court and ramps for skate or bike use are the favourite options. An update would be provided in the next Town Council newsletter, but the working party were encouraged by the input from residents so far.

08/94 FIRE RISK ASSESSMENT

The Town Clerk advised that the Town Council needed to undertake official Fire Risk Assessments (FRA) on our buildings which were in addition to the general risk assessments which had already been carried out. The local Fire Officer had advised we would be given a limited time to undertake any essential works arising from the FRA and the Town Clerk confirmed we would be audited early in January 2009 in this respect. The Town Clerk has already received two quotations for the installation of fire alarm systems for the Queen Elizabeth School and the Town Hall and a third quote is expected. Using the figures provided so far, expenditure of approximately £15,000 will be needed to install two new fire alarm systems and to replace the old system at Judith's Field which is not up to current fire standard regulations. This essential expenditure was APPROVED. The Town Clerk would keep Cllrs advised on progress as it was made.

08/95 CORRESPONDENCE - see Appendix A

THE MAYOR confirmed that the Kids Club at Godmanchester Primary School would be placing a bench outside the school, in Park Lane, in memory of Carol Godley.

Huntingdon Community Radio had held a presentation at the George Hotel and was seeking as much support as possible in their application for a license. Town Clerk would write to confirm the support of the Town Council.

The Civic Society had provided some information on The Causeway in light of recent articles in local papers concerning proposed flood defences.

CLLR BUTCHER advised that a quote had been received from Peter Stopford which identified work needed on trees on the Recreation Ground. Since the report one large, old tree had been identified as extremely dangerous as it was split down the middle. CLLR BUTCHER had liaised with two further tree surgeons and work had been undertaken to pollard the tree. The price for this work from F R Kidman would be £760 and this sum was APPROVED.

CLLR BUTCHER advised that we had the opportunity to submit a bid for a small scale environmental improvement scheme. Two suggestions made were to replace the Town Hall front doors which had been damaged and patched over time, or to undertake repairs to the steps at the Mill Sluice which have recently been cleared by volunteers from the Godmanchester in Bloom team and also with help from the Community Service work force. CLLR BUTCHER would seek costs for both of these projects and keep everyone advised on progress.

CLLR BUTCHER advised he and the Town Clerk had met with John Hesp who was representing Atkins regarding flood defences around the Town Hall. The area discussed was from the edge of the public toilets adjacent to the car park, under the Chinese Bridge, the rear of the Town Hall to the corner of the Town Hall building. It was suggested that the low wall in the car park would be rebuilt slightly higher (to meet the 10' 5" marker as seen to the rear of the Chinese Bridge) that the gap in the wall leading to the steps into the Mill Stream would be closed and if required steps could be provided to take pedestrians up and over the wall. The platform on the stream side of the wall would be extended and taken from the edge of the public toilets, under the bridge and to the edge of the Town Hall. This would all be block paved to match the finish of the car park. Mr Hesp had been advised we would also require appropriate security railings to prevent anyone gaining access to the rear of the Town Hall. The Town Council had no objections to these proposals and the Town Clerk would write to the Environment Agency to confirm our agreement, subject to final plans. Mr Hesp had raised some concern over the position of the Chinese Bridge in relation to the platform and pilings which would need to continue under the bridge itself. The Town Clerk would advise him to contact the officers considering the replacement of the Chinese Bridge in an attempt to ensure works were carried out at the opportune time.

CLLR DUTTON advised that public consultation was being carried out relating to the Huntingdon Riverside. Website details were provided for anyone interested in taking part.

CLLR DUTTON had received a letter from a resident in Sears Close raising concerns about pedestrian safety in Sweetings Road. CLLR DUTTON advised the Town Council had been successful in a recent bid for additional traffic calming measures elsewhere in the Town, but

he would follow this up and investigate whether any S106 money from the nearby development could be allocated to this site. Town Clerk would acknowledge the letter.

CLLR MRS DUTTON advised a recent inspection from Wicksteed Leisure had identified some items requiring attention. Town Clerk would instruct our Ground Maintenance contractor to repair the trip hazards as stated in the report. CLLR MRS DUTTON suggested other works be included in next year's budget figures and she confirmed she would forward the necessary figures to CLLR RZYMEK. CLLR MRS DUTTON confirmed that she and CLLR RZYMEK had carried out Play Equipment Risk Assessments recently. One item identified by Wicksteed as a medium risk was the lack of fencing around logworld on the Recreation Ground. It was considered that the equipment was far enough away from the river to not involve a danger of falling into the water and it was also considered that this piece of equipment was designed for an older age group who would not need to be contained in order to reduce the risk. It was therefore recommended that a fence was not needed around logworld. This decision was AGREED.

CLLR HYAMS confirmed the two disabled access fishing platforms had now been installed on Mill Stream.

CLLR MS MIDDLETON confirmed quotes had been received from a Godmanchester resident for printing the Town newsletter. It was AGREED that as the next edition of the newsletter would be put together while CLLR HYAMS was abroad, it would assist him to continue to liaise with the existing printer on this occasion. Town Clerk would advise.

08/96 ACCOUNTS

The accounts set out in Appendix B were APPROVED. A petty cash account for the period ending 16th October 2008 was presented to the Council. The Town Clerk also presented Cllrs with a quarterly bank reconciliation for the period to 30th September 2008.

08/97 PLANNING APPLICATIONS

The applications and correspondence set out in Appendix C were considered. The Town Clerk would advise HDC of the Council's recommendations.

CLLR WELLS had drafted a response regarding the Cambridge and Peterborough Mineral Waste Plan. He was thanked for his excellent wording and it was AGREED with minor amendment he could submit the response on behalf of the Town Council.

CLLR WELLS reported that he had attended the recent HDC Development Control Panel and was disappointed that CLLR DUTTON, who sits on the DCP, had criticised the Godmanchester Planning Committee and questioned the decisions they had made. CLLR DUTTON confirmed he took no part in any discussions relating to planning matters in Town Council meetings as he has a continued declared interest. In the particular case being raised, the Town Council had initially recommended approval but when further information had been presented by a neighbour, it was felt the decision had been made without full information being supplied by the District Council and our decision on a further application was to recommend refusal. It was this change in our recommendation which CLLR DUTTON criticised.

It was clarified that the Planning committee is open for any Cllr to attend. Its proposals are considered by the full Council before recommendations are sent to HDC. In this instance the Council changed its mind when further information was received from HDC and the neighbour.

Following discussion, it was AGREED that any Cllr with concerns on Town Council actions, should in the first instance raise them with the Town Council.

CLLR DUTTON offered to collect the paperwork, requested from Planning twice by the Town Clerk, to ensure the Town Council have full current policies to refer to when considering planning applications. CLLR DUTTON would also request that for all applications and on all changes in planning policy that the Town Council is kept fully informed.

08/98 DISTRICT/COUNTY COUNCIL REPORTS

CLLR HYAMS advised that NATS had not made any decisions on air space routes.

CLLR HYAMS had attended a recent Flood Forum and raised the issue of the Town Council having an emergency plan in place. The Town Clerk advised this had been considered before but the Town Council was not in a position to create, manage or fund such a scheme. CLLR HYAMS offered to obtain copies of neighbouring towns and parishes emergency plans so Cllrs could see the sort of things they contained and effort involved in preparing one.

CLLR DUTTON advised work would be undertaken shortly on repairs to the Town bridge. Statistics were also being put together to indicate the number of HGVs travelling over the bridge and a reduced weight limit was being proposed.

CLLR COHEN expressed his concern regarding the speed vehicles were travelling around the ring road and the increasing number of vehicles jumping traffic lights. CLLR DUTTON and CLLR HYAMS would look into this.

08/99 WORKING PARTY (WP) REPORTS: not covered by correspondence

CLLR BUTCHER confirmed there had been a positive response in relation to the provision of a bus shelter in Old Court Hall. A request to HDC would be made to provide a simple shelter.

CLLR BROWN reported that GMC in Bloom hoped to create a wild flower meadow at the junction of East Chadley Lane and Park Lane. An Archaeological Technician would need to investigate the site before any work could be undertaken at a cost of £295 for 1 day. Town Clerk advised GMCiB had a balance of £750 outstanding to them on the grant awarded to them in June 2008 which could be used for this purpose if they wished.

MISCELLANEOUS

The Town Clerk will be purchasing a new phone for the Town Office. It was AGREED that the fax facility would not be required for the replacement system.

The next newsletter will be distributed in time to promote the Christmas festivities planned in the town. CLLR MIDDLETON will circulate a contents list and indicate which Cllrs volunteered to contribute short articles.

CLLR DUTTON commented that the Town Clerk, as the official for the Town Council, should wear the proper robes of the office and should not be mistaken as a Cllr. Town Clerk would investigate the costs involved.

THE NEXT COUNCIL MEETING WILL BE HELD ON 20 NOVEMBER 2008

The meeting ended at 10.40pm Mayor