

**GODMANCHESTER TOWN COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD IN THE GODMANCHESTER TOWN HALL
ON THURSDAY 19 MARCH 2009**

PRESENT: G WILSON Town Mayor, M COHEN Deputy Town Mayor
Councillors: D BROWN, H R BUTCHER, T CANT, J DUTTON, C R HYAMS, Ms D
MIDDLETON, D O'DONNELL, D TAYLOR, N WELLS, Mrs S WORTHINGTON

Town Clerk: Mrs M LIDDIARD
Mace Bearer: Mr M WILLIAMS

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

6 members of the public were in attendance

09/029 TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES AND REASONS FOR ABSENCE

CLLR DOBBIE – illness; CLLR MRS HULL – no reason provided; CLLR MRS LOOKER
– family business meeting; CLLR RICHARDSON – on holiday; CLLR VANE PERCY –
attending concert

09/030 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:

CLLR TAYLOR declared an interest in the Planning application relating to 10 Cambridge
Street, as he is a member of the Church.

CLLR WILSON (MAYOR) declared an interest in matters relating to the Environment
Agency as he is employed by the Environment Agency.

CLLR DUTTON and CLLR HYAMS declared their interest in matters relating to District or
County Council as they hold office in these organisations.

CLLR DUTTON confirmed he would abstain from discussions and voting on all Planning
matters.

09/031 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of the meeting held on 19 February 2009 were APPROVED and signed as a
complete and accurate record.

09/032 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SESSION:

The Town Clerk was thanked for her action in relation to the streetlight on the cycle path to
the rear of the Community Primary School, but a resident expressed his view that placing the
light without securing a power supply was a waste of money and resources. The resident also
advised there was a very large pothole on the path needing attention. CLLR DUTTON
confirmed he would follow these matters up.

A resident said he considered the Town Council were backing down over the issue of
removing the fencing placed across the steps to the river at the Mill Yard. It was confirmed
that the steps would need repair before consideration could be given to removing the fencing,
and that the Town Council was obliged to consider the health and safety issues involved and,

furthermore, they would have to take into account any plans for the area in line with the proposed flood alleviation scheme.

A resident raised his concerns, shared by other residents, that the Remembrance Day Service held in November 2008 had been marred by the traffic being allowed to continue to flow during the service, and in particular during the two minutes silence. He was assured that the Town Clerk had taken immediate steps the day after the service to speak to representatives from Highways and the Police to begin preparations for a formal road closure for the Remembrance Day Service to be held in 2009. The Town Clerk also confirmed she had received several complaints from residents regarding the traffic movement during the service and the Town Council were doing all they could to ensure it did not happen again.

A resident congratulated the Town Council on the recent newsletter and asked, in relation to an article about the proposal to build new houses in the town, why the District Council were apparently supporting the scheme to build a further 800 homes in Godmanchester? THE MAYOR confirmed that, during the week the Core Strategy was being examined, he and CLLR HYAMS had attended the hearing taking place and had made strong representations on behalf of the Town against the new development.

A resident confirmed he had written to all Cllrs to advise on his personal views in relation to the negotiations with home-owners along The Avenue and Post Street in relation to Flood Defences. THE MAYOR thanked him for his letter. Town Clerk would acknowledge formally.

A resident referred to the article in the current issue of the local paper, which states the Environment Agency have come up with a preferred option for the Flood Alleviation Scheme, and have indicated this to be raising the wall along the Causeway slightly. He said although he disagreed with the need for additional flood defences along the Causeway, he recognised the rest of the scheme was necessary; however, he stated remedies were needed for Cook's backwater and these should be part of the scheme when finalised. He reminded Cllrs of the low lying land to the East of the town which would be affected in a flood situation, and also the increased insurance premiums residents in a potential flood area would have to pay.

CLLR HYAMS confirmed a short meeting with representatives from the Environment Agency had taken place earlier today (19th March) and, although the newspaper article indicated a preferred option, this did not necessarily represent the final design. Further consultations would be taking place in due course and the EA had agreed to provide the Town Council with a monthly update to keep all residents advised as progress was made.

The Town Council were asked to consider allocating 2 spaces as disabled parking bays, preferably located on the Town Hall car park. CLLR DUTTON would make enquiries on this issue.

A resident expressed his disappointment that the Town Council were not following past protocol by having prayers at the start of their gowned meetings. This would be raised on the Agenda in April for discussion and resolution.

A resident advised those present that in May 1959 passenger services from Godmanchester Station had ceased. He hoped to put together a short presentation to commemorate 50 years,

which the Town Council, and other residents, may find interesting. THE MAYOR thanked him for this, and suggested it may be possible to include details in the next newsletter.

THE MAYOR thanked the members of public for their views and comments.

09/033 TOWN MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS:

THE MAYOR had represented the Town on 8 occasions and the DEPUTY MAYOR on 4, since the last Town Council meeting.

THE MAYOR introduced Mr Martin Williams, our Mace Bearer, and Mr Fred Carter, our Deputy Mace Bearer, to those present, and thanked them both for their agreement to attend all future Town Council meetings.

THE MAYOR thanked Cllrs who had attended the Musical Evening at St Mary the Virgin which had raised just under £900. Donations had been made to St Mary's, St Anne's CofE Primary School, and CIMA to thank them for their involvement and for making it such an enjoyable event. CLLR BUTCHER commented that it was lovely evening, but he was disappointed that not more members of the Council had been there to support the Mayor.

THE MAYOR reminded everyone that the Annual Town Meeting would take place on 7th April. Godmanchester in Bloom had kindly agreed to attend as our Guest Speaker. Provision of a large poster to be placed on the wall outside the vicarage was discussed and it was AGREED to meet the cost of £40 plus VAT to raise awareness and hopefully increase the numbers of residents attending. A further reminder that the Town Clerk needs reports from the Chairs of working parties as soon as possible.

THE MAYOR thanked CLLR HYAMS and CLLR MS MIDDLETON for an excellent newsletter. It was suggested that anyone with ideas for articles for the next edition should start passing them to CLLR MS MIDDLETON now.

THE MAYOR reported the inspection from the Fire Officer had gone well and the Town Clerk was now ensuring all hirers of the facilities at QES and Judith's Field were personally advised of the procedure to follow in the event of a fire. THE MAYOR thanked the Town Clerk and her Assistant for getting all necessary work done within the timescale.

09/034 GODMANCHESTER IN BLOOM – PROVISION OF PLANTERS

CLLR BROWN confirmed the brick planters previously mentioned would not concern the Town Council as they were not being asked for any funding for these units. However, it was felt the designs should be formally considered and this matter would be put before the Council again next month. In addition, proposals to create flower beds at the War Memorial site would also be considered next month.

CLLR BROWN confirmed that the wild flower meadow to be created on the mound between East Chadley Lane and Park Lane, adjacent to the pond, would be taken forward and Hinchingsbrooke Country Park Rangers would provide the seeds. The Town Council would not be asked for financial support in relation to this project.

CLLR BROWN had made progress on the matter of the planter to be built and sited on the verge by the Bridge Place car park and he sought funding to a maximum of £1000. The Town Clerk expressed the view that as the budget had only recently been agreed, if the Town Council wished to consider this request for funding, that they should also consider appropriate adjustments of the figures within the budget, and she stated she would not be happy adding anything more to the bottom line, particularly as our expenditure could be so high in the forthcoming year. It was AGREED to reconsider this request in June.

09/035 TOWN CLERK'S REPORT ON MATTERS ARISING:

The Town Clerk confirmed that, following a discussion with CLLR O'DONNELL, she would delay discussions with an Independent Financial Advisor pending investigating whether local high street building societies would offer corporate accounts which would protect a sum up to £50,000.

35.1 CLEANING OF THE WAR MEMORIAL: CLLR COHEN confirmed he had received a quotation from a Stonemason for cleaning and re-incising the lettering on the War Memorial. He had asked for this to be broken down into 2 quotes as it may be better to clean the War Memorial and then consider the further work required. CLLR BROWN suggested he may be able to offer assistance and he will liaise with CLLR COHEN.

35.2 PROPERTY – CHURCHYARD: CLLR MRS WORTHINGTON advised progress was slow in resolving duty and responsibility in this matter. She had made enquiries with another parish who are currently undertaking the task of health and safety/risk assessments in their churchyard, and their experiences will be of great assistance. CLLR MRS WORTHINGTON will obtain an estimate for costs to secure the four identified memorials in the churchyard which are deemed unsafe, and the Town Clerk will write to advise the PCC of the current position.

35.3 PROPERTY – NON CONFORMIST BURIAL GROUND: CLLR MRS WORTHINGTON, CLLR COHEN and the Town Clerk had met with Mr Pithey to view the original conveyance document relating to the sale of land to form the Non Conformist Burial Ground. It does not provide information about what should happen to the land if the Trust is wound up, nor does it refer to a Trust, but does refer to named Trustees. CLLR MRS WORTHINGTON will make further enquiries regarding the status of the Trust.

09/036 TOWN COUNCIL WEBSITE

CLLR MS MIDDLETON proposes holding a communications working party to discuss in particular the content required on a Town Council website. If possible a report will be circulated and a proposal made for the next Town Council meeting.

09/037 ROLE OF MAYOR/ELECTION PROCEDURE

The Town Clerk provided details of the role of Chairman (Mayor) together with a copy of the relevant Standing Order relating to the election of Mayor and Deputy Mayor. It was AGREED that nomination papers for this year's appointments should be received in the Town Office by 1pm on 13th May 2009.

09/038 ANNUAL REPORT:

In addition to distribution of quarterly newsletters, the Town Clerk proposed an Annual Report should be produced for distribution to all households towards the end of April. Draft content was considered and APPROVED. As the issue would be four pages, it was anticipated that costs would be the same as for the latest four page newsletter which was £299. Costs of £299 were therefore APPROVED. Town Clerk will use information from reports to be provided for the Annual Meeting to complete the Annual Report and will liaise with CLLR HYAMS regarding layout.

09/039 LETTERS OF CONCERN REGARDING CYCLE ROUTES

THE MAYOR had received 47 letters from children at Godmanchester Community Primary School regarding safe cycle routes to school. THE MAYOR would respond to the children and pass the matter to CLLR DUTTON to deal with as a road safety issue.

09/040 CORRESPONDENCE (see Appendix A)

40.1 Items of correspondence from Godmanchester Youth Club and Magpas requesting financial assistance would be acknowledged and brought forward to June 2009.

09/041 ACCOUNTS.

41.1 The accounts set out in Appendix B were APPROVED.

41.2 Details of Mr Ken Sneath's qualifications were provided for all Cllrs and it was AGREED he should be appointed as internal auditor to audit the accounts for the year ending 31 March 2009.

09/042 PLANNING APPLICATIONS AND CORRESPONDENCE

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

42.2 Scoping Opinion: Godmanchester Flood Alleviation – it was understood this document related to environmental issues and the Town Council had no comments at this time

42.3 Correspondence from South Cambridgeshire District Council – no comment – for information only

42.4 HDC Development Control Policies – For information, no response required.

42.5 THE MAYOR confirmed an inspector was reviewing the Core Strategy Huntingdonshire District Council had submitted to the Secretary of State and the strategy was being examined in public. The inspector had raised a series of questions, referred to as “main matters”. Once the inspector has finished hearing from all parties, he would write a report, which he informed attendees would be binding on the Council. THE MAYOR and CLLR HYAMS had attended over two days and had expressed the views of the Town Council that further development in Godmanchester was not sustainable.

09/043 DISTRICT/COUNTY COUNCIL REPORTS.

CLLR HYAMS stated his concerns regarding the state of the Town bridge between Godmanchester and Huntingdon. He and CLLR DUTTON were pressing for a long term solution, including a repair strategy and the implementation of weight restrictions.

CLLR DUTTON confirmed he had expressed his views regarding a planning application submitted by Anglian Water in relation to a sludge treatment plant in Cow Lane. He was pleased to report his concerns had been taken into account and conditions had been placed on the application to reduce the smell emitted from the plant.

CLLR DUTTON advised that, following consultation on the number of licensed taxis in Huntingdonshire, it had been agreed to remove the existing limit, and it was likely that more applications would be received for a taxi licence.

09/044 MISCELLEANOUS

CLLR MS MIDDLETON advised a Communications working party would take place on Tuesday 24 March in the QES.

CLLR BROWN asked whether Cllrs would like the opportunity to visit District Council's CCTV operation centre. Those interested should let him know and he will liaise with CLLR DUTTON.

CLLR COHEN advised that, the Twinning Group had organised a holiday to Wertheim from 21 – 25 May, and there were two remaining vacancies. If anyone was interested, he had more information.

Town Clerk advised a new rota was being drawn up for placing flowers on the War Memorial during the period Easter Sunday to Remembrance Sunday. If Cllrs would like to be involved in the rota, please let the Town Clerk know.

Huntingdonshire District Council is arranging the Compost giveaway event again to take place from 11th May 2009. CLLR BROWN would liaise with the Godmanchester nursery regarding their agreement to act as a distribution point.

THE NEXT COUNCIL MEETING WILL BE HELD ON 16 APRIL 2009 IN THE QUEEN ELIZABETH SCHOOL

The meeting ended at 10.15 pm Mayor