

## **MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL TOWN COUNCIL MEETING HELD IN THE TOWN HALL ON THURSDAY 21 MAY 2009**

**PRESENT:** G WILSON Town Mayor, M COHEN Deputy Town Mayor  
Councillors: D BROWN, H R BUTCHER, T CANT, M DOBBIE, J DUTTON, Mrs H HULL, C R HYAMS, Mrs A M LOOKER, D O'DONNELL, C RICHARDSON, D TAYLOR, C VANE PERCY, N WELLS, Mrs S WORTHINGTON

Town Clerk: Mrs M LIDDIARD  
Mace Bearer: Mr M WILLIAMS  
Chaplain: Rev. J CRADDOCK

**APOLOGIES:** Cllr: Ms D MIDDLETON

9 members of the public were in attendance

THE MAYOR introduced Reverend Jeremy Craddock who opened the meeting with prayers.

THE MAYOR confirmed that the first item of business would be to elect a new Mayor for the year 2009-2010 and that the majority of the Cllrs were in favour of a secret ballot so that no one would feel intimidated, and each Cllr should vote for the candidate they believed most appropriate for the role. CLLR HYAMS had previously indicated he was content that voting was by secret ballot, but had recently stated his preference was that a show of hands be used for the vote. He confirmed he was not requesting a recorded vote. Following discussion it was AGREED that the form of voting would be by secret ballot, but that confirmation would be provided of how each Cllr had voted.

### **09/059 ELECTION OF MAYOR**

09/059.1 CLLR COHEN and CLLR HYAMS addressed the meeting and a secret ballot was taken. Votes were counted with CLLR COHEN and CLLR HYAMS present and CLLR COHEN was duly elected as Town Mayor.

09/059.2 CLLR COHEN read and signed his Declaration of Acceptance of Office, which was signed and witnessed by the Town Clerk.

### **09/060 ELECTION OF DEPUTY MAYOR**

09/060.1 CLLR BROWN was duly elected unopposed as Deputy Town Mayor.

09/060.2 CLLR BROWN read and signed his Declaration of Acceptance of Office, which was signed and witnessed by the Town Clerk.

### **09/061 OUTGOING MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

CLLR WILSON stated it had been a privilege to have been Mayor and he, and his wife Sarah, had thoroughly enjoyed representing the town.

CLLR WILSON confirmed May had been particularly busy, and he had represented the Town on 21 occasions, making a total for the year of 120.

CLLR WILSON said the variety had been amazing from thanking the choir from Szentendre for singing in the church on Saturday, in his best Hungarian, to tea with the Rainbows and canapés with the High Sheriff, not counting the more formal meetings with officers. He said there had been some wonderful opportunities to promote the town across the district.

CLLR WILSON recognised as a council we have had some challenging issues to deal with this year and he confirmed he will continue to help the Mayor in his term in office as we face issues ranging from new development, managing flood risk and providing even better services for the town.

CLLR WILSON reported the traditional events all went well this year and offered his thanks to Rev David Busk for hosting the Civic Service, and to everyone who joined in the Carol Service.

It is traditional for the Mayor to raise money for a chosen charity. CLLR WILSON confirmed he would be handing a cheque for £2500 to the Richmond Fellowship, which had been his charity for the year. Richmond Fellowship is a national charity with an office in Godmanchester that helps people in the district with mental health problems regain their confidence and self esteem. They do some wonderful work locally supporting people to stay in work or providing training to get back into work.

CLLR WILSON wished to thank the many people who attended the events he had arranged or who had given donations. The Coop were extremely generous and provided the wines for a wine tasting evening. The White Hart kindly hosted an excellent Civic Dinner where the Poet Laureate of Peterborough entertained a full house of 60. Also about 150 people enjoyed the charity concert listening to St Anne's C of E Primary School Choir and Huntingdon Youth Concert band and Brass band in St Mary's Church. It was great fun and again CLLR WILSON wished to thank Rev David Busk for allowing us to use the church and also to Anthea Kenna, Head of St Anne's C of E Primary School and Cambridgeshire Music for bringing their talented students.

CLLR WILSON said, finally he would like to thank the Town Clerk Madelaine Liddiard and the Assistant to the Town Clerk David Roffe for the wonderful work they do for us all and in particular for the support they have provided to him in his role as Mayor. He also thanked our two Mace Bearers Martin Williams and Fred Carter, Malcolm Cohen the Deputy Mayor and all Cllrs for their support.

The Outgoing Mayor and Deputy Mayor were escorted from the room by the Mace Bearer. The Mayor and Deputy Mayor for 2009-2010 were escorted into the room by the Mace Bearer.

## **09/062 TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES AND REASONS FOR ABSENCE**

CLLR MS MIDDLETON – holiday

## **09/063 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:**

CLLR WILSON declared a personal interest in an item of correspondence from the Environment Agency, as they are his employers.

## **09/064 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

09/064.1 The Minutes of the meeting held on 16 April 2009 were APPROVED and signed as a complete and accurate record.

09/064.2 The Minutes of the Annual Town Meeting held on 7th April 2009 were APPROVED and signed as a complete and accurate record.

## **09/065 TO ADOPT A PROTOCOL TO MANAGE PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AND INTERNAL COMMUNICATION PROCEDURE**

THE MAYOR presented the revised protocol for managing public participation. Following discussion, it was AGREED to adopt this procedure with immediate effect. Town Clerk would forward a copy to all Cllrs for information. CLLR DUTTON advised that if discussions and decisions were considered and reached outside the meeting, via e-mail, that this was pre-determination and Cllrs should be expressing an interest when the matter appeared as an item on the agenda.

## **09/066 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SESSION:**

Mr Pauley offered an apology to THE MAYOR for any unintentional offence he had caused by his recent letters published in the local newspapers. He stressed his intention was to raise matters he believed were important to the town and he hoped that in relation to matters relating to the Environment Agency that a further public exhibition would be held in due course.

Mr Doherty expressed his opinion that all business relating to the town and all town council business should take place at Council meetings, in the Council chamber. He further reminded Cllrs that the lowest drainage point in the town was at the White Hart in Cambridge Road and this was of vital importance when discussing flood risk management.

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

## **09/067 TOWN MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

THE MAYOR reported that as DEPUTY MAYOR he had represented the Town on 4 occasions since the last meeting.

THE MAYOR thanked CLLR WILSON for all the good work he had done during his year in office, which had kept Godmanchester's profile high, and he was delighted to present him with a badge denoting "Former Mayor".

THE MAYOR advised the Town Clerk would be out of the office on Tuesday 26th May.

THE MAYOR reminded Cllrs that articles for the next Town Council newsletter were needed by 30th May. Please e-mail to CLLR MS MIDDLETON.

## **09/068 TO REVIEW COUNCILLOR'S PORTFOLIOS**

09/068.1 It was AGREED to bring this matter forward at the June meeting. One additional item for consideration was streamlining Town Council procedures, documents and policies.

09/068.2 It was AGREED that Cllrs holding a representative role on outside bodies would continue to do so. In addition, CLLR CANT would take on a representative role with the Neighbourhood Policing and National Probation Service.

#### **09/069 TOWN CLERK'S REPORT ON MATTERS ARISING:**

Cllrs had been presented with an updated list of outstanding matters.

09/069.1 PLANTERS: CLLR BROWN advised discussions had been continuing regarding the planter to be sited at the Bridge Place car park. He further advised that CCC and HDC had been consulted regarding the preferred locations for the brick planters and both bodies had given their permission, as the planters would not obstruct the footpath, and would not impede access to underground cables. Several Cllrs had inspected the proposed sites and CLLR BROWN confirmed funding had been secured for the first planter, with possibility of the second being agreed shortly. The Town Council were not being asked for any financial contribution, but were being asked to approve the design and location of the 3 planters at: the junction of Cambridge Street with The Causeway (outside Gatehouse Estates); the junction of The Causeway with West Street (outside View House); and the junction of Old Court Hall with Silver Street (outside Richardson's Bakers). CLLR BROWN further confirmed plants were being provided by HDC, and residents had given their support and had confirmed the planters would be watered. The Council therefore AGREED to the design and proposed locations of the three brick planters.

09/069.2 MAYORAL BOARD: CLLR VANE PERCY had provided details of Hirst Conservation who had provided an outline of the possible costs involved in restoring the Mayoral Board. It was AGREED that Hirst Conservation be employed to undertake an inspection of the board, a test cleaning patch, and be asked to provide a detailed specification of their proposals and a sum of up to £400 was APPROVED. It was noted that depending on the projected costs, outside funding might be required to facilitate this project.

#### **09/070 CORRESPONDENCE - see Appendix A**

Town Clerk will respond to a letter from Mr Pauley as soon as comments are received from CLLR BUTCHER and CLLR BROWN.

Town Clerk will forward a copy of a list provided by the Godmanchester Community School to Cllrs, who may be able to take some of the ideas forward.

CLLR DUTTON confirmed an e-mail regarding cycle paths was being dealt with by Sir Peter Brown, and related to a cycle path in George Street, Huntingdon.

CLLR HYAMS reported that the letter from the Environment Agency stated that a joint letter for the local paper would be deferred until after the local elections had taken place.

CLLR TAYLOR advised Wicksteed Leisure had undertaken their quarterly report and again had stated a fence was required around logworld due to its proximity to water. As the play equipment is 30 yards from the water, it was considered a reasonable risk and we would not follow up on this recommendation.

CLLR TAYLOR asked for funding for a CPALC training workshop on Playground Risk Assessment, which would take place later in the year. The cost is £35 per delegate and it was AGREED he and the Town Clerk would attend.

CLLR MRS WORTHINGTON confirmed a request for space for a lockable storage cupboard had been received from the Youth Club. This would be investigated.

THE MAYOR was sad to report the death of Peter Ballantine, Treasurer of St Mary the Virgin PCC. His funeral would take place on 29th May 2009.

CLLR MRS LOOKER left at 9.40pm

### **09/071 FINANCIAL/ACCOUNTS.**

09/071.1 The list of payments detailed in Appendix B were presented to the Town Council and APPROVED.

09/071.2 The Petty Cash reconciliation was presented to the Town Council.

09/071.3 A budget report on the year to date was presented. The Town Clerk confirmed comments on the format were welcome.

09/071.4 It was AGREED that a quotation from Fenland Stone for the cleaning of the War Memorial in the sum of £869.57 be accepted.

09/071.5 It was AGREED that a quotation from Fenland Stone for the re-lettering of names on the War Memorial in the sum of £800 be accepted. (Town Clerk would discuss possible reduction in quoted sums as both quotes were being accepted)

09/071.6 Having reviewed the Financial Regulations it was AGREED more detail was needed to draw up an internal audit policy and a finance working party would be called to progress this issue. It was also AGREED Cllrs should undertake periodic inspections of the income to the Town Council which would require attendance at the Town Office. CLLRS BUTCHER, DOBBIE AND WORTHINGTON AGREED to undertake these inspections. The remainder of the Financial Regulations were APPROVED and adopted for a further 2 years and the monthly financial actions would be added as an appendix for information.

09/071.7 A request had been received from GMC Senior Citizens Club for an increase in the amount paid as a contribution to the cost of utilities by the Town Office. It was AGREED that the sum be increased with immediate effect from £150 to £180 per quarter. Town Clerk would advise, and also suggest further savings on the utility costs could be achieved by switching supplier.

### **09/072 GRANT AWARDING POLICY**

Following suggestions for amendment and clarification, it was AGREED that the draft Grant Awarding Policy be adopted with immediate effect. It was appreciated that as grant applications were due to be considered next month, not all applicants would be able to provide all the information required under the new scheme in the timescale. Town Clerk would forward copies of the application form in the first instance and ask that applicants provide as much detail as possible.

### **09/072 SHORT TERM PARKING BAYS**

CLLR HYAMS advised shopkeepers located on Old Court Hall had raised a petition seeking short term parking bays to assist their customers, as the existing double yellow lines

prevented customers parking close to the butcher, baker or fishing tackle shop. The petition would be presented to the Area Joint Committee and officers would be asked to provide a report. The opinion of the Town Council was the suggested location (ie in the area outside Stanjays or the butchers) was exceedingly dangerous and double yellow lines were in place for a reason.

CLLR VANE PERCY left at 10.35pm

### **09/073 PLANNING APPLICATIONS AND CORRESPONDENCE**

The applications and correspondence set out in Appendix C were considered. The Town Clerk would advise HDC of the Council's recommendations. CLLR DUTTON abstained from commenting on Planning matters, as he is a member of the DCP. Following some confusion on a recent application, CLLR HYAMS and CLLR DUTTON were asked to task HDC Planning Dept with checking planning applications thoroughly before requesting comments from consultees. CLLR HYAMS was also asked to arrange a follow up meeting with a representative from Planning to provide information about how HDC Planning reached their decisions, as this would assist the Town Council in their deliberations.

CLLR WELLS confirmed he would not be present at the next Planning WP and CLLR BROWN AGREED to take the meeting on his behalf.

### **09/074 DISTRICT/COUNTY COUNCIL REPORTS.**

CLLR DUTTON confirmed he had been re-elected to the position of Vice Chair for HDC.

CLLR HYAMS requested that the item on District/County Council reports be considered earlier on the agenda. This was AGREED.

CLLR HYAMS confirmed work to repair the Town Bridge had taken place.

CLLR HYAMS was asked to follow up the visit for Town Councillors to see the CCTV control centre.

CLLR HYAMS was asked to hasten the matter of signage for the Chinese Bridge to restrict pedestrian numbers crossing at one time, particularly over Gala weekend.

CLLR HYAMS was asked to investigate outstanding repairs to an area of fencing under the A14 flyover on The Avenue. CLLR BROWN had been trying to resolve this problem but had reached an impasse, as HDC and CCC could not agree on ownership or responsibility for this street scene issue.

### **MISCELLEANOUS**

Compost has been delivered to the nursery in Park Lane. Thank you to the volunteers who have come forward to help with the distribution. Town Clerk will circulate a list to confirm.

CLLR BUTCHER reported dead wood on the tree on the War Memorial site had been removed. He further advised that the dugout at Judith's Field was in a dangerous state and it

would be demolished. The Town Clerk had checked with football teams who had used Judith's Field, and they had confirmed they didn't use the dugout anymore.

**THE NEXT COUNCIL MEETING WILL BE HELD ON 18 JUNE 2009 IN THE TOWN HALL**

The meeting ended at 11.15 pm Mayor