

MINUTES OF THE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING HELD IN THE
TOWN HALL ON THURSDAY 11 FEBRUARY 2010

PRESENT: D BROWN: Town Mayor

Councillors: R BUTCHER, T CANT, Mrs H HULL, C HYAMS, Ms J MacLEOD, A MARTIN, Ms D MIDDLETON, N PAULEY, C RICHARDSON, D TAYLOR, C VANE PERCY, N WELLS, A WELTON, Mrs S WORTHINGTON, G WILSON

Town Clerk: Mrs M LIDDIARD

Mace Bearer: Mr M WILLIAMS

5 members of the public were in attendance

10/25 ELECTION OF MAYOR

Following the resignation of CLLR MALCOLM COHEN, it was proposed that CLLR DAVID BROWN be elected to the office of TOWN MAYOR. This was unanimously AGREED. CLLR BROWN duly made his Declaration of Acceptance of Office, which was witnessed by the Town Clerk.

It was AGREED that a DEPUTY MAYOR would not be appointed for the remaining term of office, which is until the next Mayor is appointed on 20 May 2010.

10/26 TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES AND REASONS FOR ABSENCE

All Cllrs present.

10/27 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:

CLLR Ms MIDDLETON: personal and prejudicial interest in Planning item relating to SHLAA. CLLR RICHARDSON: personal interest in planning matter relating to footpath linking Judith's Field with Roman Way. CLLR TAYLOR: personal interest in planning matter relating to parking for the Baptist Church.

10/28 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of the meeting held on 14th January 2010 were duly APPROVED and signed as a complete and accurate record. The Minutes of the extra-ordinary meeting held on 28th January 2010 were duly APPROVED and signed as a complete and accurate record.

10/29 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SESSION:

Ms Crowther-Light expressed concern that the Town Council were considering requesting removal of the fence between Roman Way and Judith's Field. She stated she had never been told there was a Right of Way there and she believed if the route were opened up, residents who lived adjacent to the fence in question would suffer from anti social behaviour.

10/30 TOWN MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS:

THE MAYOR paid tribute to Malcolm Cohen's 10 years as a Town Councillor and outlined several activities that Malcolm had been involved in which had contributed to the town. THE MAYOR expressed his gratitude for the good relationships forged with other towns and parishes, and was joined by all Cllrs in wishing him and his wife well. A vote of thanks to Malcolm was proposed and unanimously supported. THE MAYOR would write to Malcolm on behalf of the Town Council expressing our thanks.

The former Mayor had represented the town on 1 occasion since the last meeting and CLLR BROWN (as Deputy Mayor) had represented the town on 3 occasions.

THE MAYOR confirmed the vacancy for Town Councillor had been advertised, and if an election was not called for, the Town Council would be able to co-opt to fill the position from the March Town Council meeting onwards. It was suggested that the vacancy be promoted through the next edition of the newsletter.

THE MAYOR confirmed the Town Clerk would be on holiday during the week commencing 15th February and as the Town Office was due to be painted during the week, all Cllrs were asked to treat the office as closed. Messages could be left on the answerphone and the Town Clerk's Assistant would respond.

THE MAYOR thanked all who attended open meeting held on 30th January, to discuss the future development options on Judith's Field.

THE MAYOR confirmed that the Mayor's Charity Dinner would go ahead as planned on 23rd April, with proceeds being donated to the former Mayor's chosen charities for the year. THE MAYOR advised all he would be grateful for Cllrs support.

THE MAYOR confirmed that as the Town Council did not have a Deputy Mayor, he would appreciate support from all Cllrs to ensure Godmanchester was appropriately represented through invitations to the Mayor.

THE MAYOR confirmed that CLLR HYAMS would be putting together the next Town Council newsletter and it was hoped this would be set, printed and delivered by mid March. All Cllrs were invited to pass articles to CLLR HYAMS as soon as possible. THE MAYOR gave an early request to Chairs of Working Parties who need to present a short report on the year's activities, which would be presented at the Annual Town Meeting, but would be needed for summary in the Annual Report.

THE MAYOR confirmed that work to clear the overgrown area of the Non Conformist Burial Ground had been undertaken by the Community Payback Team. The area was greatly improved and the Town Clerk would send a letter of thanks to those who had carried out the work.

THE MAYOR offered official congratulations, on behalf of the Town Council, to the Town Clerk who had successfully completed the Certificate in Local Council Administration and was now "qualified".

10/31 TOWN CLERK'S REPORT ON MATTERS ARISING:

The updated list of outstanding matters was presented to the Town Council.

10/31.1 2012: CLLR PAULEY expressed his concern that the format of any celebrations to mark 2012 now appeared to be in the complete control of a sub committee of the Community Association. Whilst there was no doubt that the Community Association were willing and capable of taking on this task, he was concerned that the Town Council were not being actively involved and would have no influence on plans to spend the notional budget being set aside by the Town Council. It was AGREED that a working party should meet to discuss this matter further, and CLLR MRS WORTHINGTON offered to draw up some draft criteria for discussion at a working party. CLLR PAULEY stated he was happy to hand responsibility for liaison on 2012 celebrations to another Cllr.

10/31.2 Cllr Surgeries: CLLR PAULEY confirmed the first date for a Town Council surgery had been set for 10th April, small hall in the Queen Elizabeth School. The time was confirmed as 11am to 1pm. CLLR PAULEY will present a list of the groups we hope to invite to the surgeries and will liaise with the Town Clerk regarding the initial invitations.

10/31.3 Play Pathfinder: CLLR TAYLOR confirmed the contract with Fenland Leisure Products had been signed. FLP had requested a deposit amounting to 20% of the contract cost, and as the Town Council had received 50% of the Play Pathfinder grant it was AGREED to meet this expense. CLLR TAYLOR confirmed a further meeting of the working party to discuss soft landscaping would take place on 15th February, details have been circulated. CLLR TAYLOR confirmed the work to install the equipment would begin on 8th March and it was hoped would be completed by 22nd March, with an official opening taking place on 27th March 2010.

10/32 DISTRICT/COUNTY COUNCIL REPORTS

CLLR WILSON advised that CLLR DUTTON had invited the leader of Cambridgeshire County Council to open the Chinese Bridge, once work had been completed. It was AGREED that the leader of CCC should be invited to attend an opening ceremony, but that it would be appropriate for the Town Mayor of Godmanchester to open the Chinese Bridge. Town Clerk would arrange.

CLLR WILSON reported that we would be invited to take part in a further consultation on the Minerals and Waste Strategy. A formal response to the consultation would be discussed at the next Planning working party.

CLLR WILSON reminded all present that an email had been sent to all Cllrs regarding the Code of Practice regarding Publicity with particular reference to the forthcoming District Council Elections. Cllrs were asked to make themselves familiar with the Code of Practice.

CLLR WILSON advised he had not been able to attend a meeting held earlier that day which had been attended by the Town Clerk and Cllrs representing Godmanchester: CLLR DUTTON, (CCC) CLLR HYAMS, (HDC) CLLR GODLEY, (HDC) and Emma Murden and Sharon Piper from the Highways Division. Various traffic matters were discussed and the Town Clerk provided a brief summary on items relating to London Road traffic calming; AJC petition relating to provision of parking for people attending Old Court Hall shops; road safety at the junction of Corpus Christi Lane and Old Court Hall; location of the proposed disabled parking bay on The Causeway; parking issues in East Chadley Lane; and our request that Godmanchester be considered as a trial town for a 20mph speed limit.

CLLR PAULEY advised he had raised an issue via CLLR GODLEY relating to a damaged fence at Mill Yard car park, and had been advised repairs were still pending satisfactory resolution of an insurance claim.

10/33 CORRESPONDENCE (see Appendix A)

The letter from CCC regarding consultation on Cambridgeshire's 3rd Local Transport Plan would be considered at the next Planning working party.

10/34 FINANCIAL/ACCOUNTS

The list of payments to be made in Appendix B was approved. Councillors received a copy of the Petty Cash Reconciliation for the period to 11th February 2010; a copy of the budget report on the year to date, and a copy of the monthly bank reconciliation as verified by THE MAYOR. Cllrs received a report following the Finance Working Party, which confirmed budgets had not been adjusted for the forthcoming year. CLLR WILSON will draw up guidelines for internal controls for approval, meanwhile, CLLR BROWN attended the Town Office to follow the audit trail for receipts, salary preparation, petty cash accounting and to approve the monthly bank reconciliation. CLLR Mrs WORTHINGTON has AGREED to carry out the same checks in March, and CLLR WELTON has AGREED to carry out these checks in April. All Cllrs are invited to take their turn to familiarise themselves with these financial procedures.

10/35 REVIEW OF AMOUNT FOR MAYORAL PURSE

The former Mayor, Malcolm Cohen, was awarded £1700 as Mayoral Purse for the year May 2009 to May 2010. Following his resignation it was noted that the allocation had been spent on the various Mayoral functions Cllr Cohen had attended on behalf of the Town. CLLR WILSON and CLLR BUTCHER confirmed they had also spent more than the Mayoral Purse allocation during their time as Town Mayor. Following discussion it was AGREED to provide the newly appointed MAYOR with a sum of £350 to be spent on Mayoral attendances between 11 February 2010 and 19 May 2010. It was also AGREED not to change the sum budgeted for the forthcoming year, but the figure would be reviewed in October as part of planned budget reviews.

CLLR HYAMS arrived at 9.07pm

10/36 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 Ms MIDDLETON declared an interest in the application relating to Wood Green. CLLR WELLS had prepared a response regarding the SHLAA. This was APPROVED. CLLR WELLS had prepared to the Fairfield Partnership following the open meeting, held on 30th January, which confirmed the views of the residents was none of Judith's Field should be used for development. It was proposed that the Town Council having consulted extensively with the townspeople requires that the whole of Judith's Field be preserved as a recreation amenity with no residential, commercial or industrial development on the site. This was unanimously AGREED. Town Clerk would advise Fairfield Partnership.

CLLR PAULEY had prepared a draft letter to Twigden Homes (now trading as Keir Partnership) regarding a fence, which had been erected preventing access from Judith's Field to Roman Way. CLLR HYAMS offered to make further enquiries on this matter and report back to the Town Council for further discussion at the next Planning working party. It was noted that there were residents opposing the re-opening of this route as well as residents who requested the fence be removed to allow access once more.

CLLR WILSON confirmed a Public Exhibition regarding the Minerals and Waste Plan would take place on 5th March between 4pm and 8pm and Brampton Memorial Hall.

10/37 CLLRS RESPONSIBILITIES

Following discussion the list of portfolios held by Cllrs was APPROVED. Town Clerk would forward a copy of the amended list to all Cllrs.

10/38 PROPERTY MATTERS

CLLR Mrs WORTHINGTON advised HDC had written to confirm the Public Conveniences would be closed on 1 April 2010. (CLLR HYAMS declared an interest.) They also offered to pass the freehold of the Public Conveniences to the Town Council. Following discussion it was AGREED to decline this offer at this time. Two Cllrs abstained from the vote. Town Clerk would advise HDC of this decision. CLLR HYAMS asked whether the Town Council had made/or intended to make its own investigations into the costs of maintaining the public conveniences. CLLR Mrs WORTHINGTON confirmed we had not looked into costs and stressed the responsibility for the public conveniences and their subsequent closure was with the District Council.

CLLR Mrs WORTHINGTON confirmed the dangerous memorials in the churchyard had now been repaired and she thanked CLLR BROWN for organising the clearance of the Non Conformist Burial Ground.

The Town Clerk had asked for approval to meet the costs of providing site elevations and drawings in respect of our application for Listed Building Consent, which was required in order to replace the front doors of the Town Hall. CLLR Mrs HULL AGREED to assist in completing these forms.

CLLR BUTCHER advised the chairs in the QES were in need of professional cleaning. Town Clerk would arrange.

10/39 PROCEDURE FOR ELECTION OF TOWN MAYOR

It was AGREED that the formal selection and election of the Town Mayor and Deputy Town Mayor for the forthcoming year would take place at the April Town Council meeting. The appointments would be effective from the Annual Town Council meeting to be held on 20th May 2010. Nomination forms were passed to all Cllrs who were asked to return them to the Town Office by 1pm on Wednesday 7th April 2010.

CLLR VANE PERCY left at 10.35pm

10/40 PUBLIC BODIES (ADMISSION TO MEETINGS) ACT 1960 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

It was RESOLVED that in accordance with Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 and by reason of the confidential nature of the remainder of the business, that the Press and Public be excluded from the meeting.

10/41 TO CONSIDER TENDERS RECEIVED IN RESPECT OF THE GROUNDS MAINTENANCE CONTRACT FOR THE PERIOD 1 APRIL 2010 – 31 MARCH 2013

CLLR BUTCHER confirmed that tenders had been invited for the Grounds Maintenance Contract for the period 1 April 2010 to 31 March 2013. A tender committee of CLLR BUTCHER, CLLR Mrs WORTHINGTON and CLLR WELTON had met to discuss the tenders received and it was proposed that the tender from Fergusons Ltd be accepted in the sum of £17634.60 per annum for three years. This was AGREED. Town Clerk would advise contractors of the outcome.

10/42 PUBLIC BODIES (ADMISSION TO MEETINGS) ACT 1960 RE-ADMITTANCE OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

It was RESOLVED that in accordance with Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 that the Press and Public be re-admitted to the meeting.
None present.

MISCELLEANOUS

CLLR CANT confirmed the Cllr Professional Development Training had been extremely useful and he recommended all Cllrs attend.

CLLR TAYLOR asked that the feasibility of the Town Council engaging a Solicitor on a retainer basis be investigated. It was pointed out that we do have access to legal advice through CPALC and NALC, but the Town Clerk would make enquiries.

CLLR BUTCHER advised that a date should be set for the Annual Litter Pick. Town Clerk to circulate possible dates.

CLLR HYAMS asked whether CLLR Ms MIDDLETON's husband would be willing to discuss setting up a Town Council website. CLLR Ms MIDDLETON would report back to Town Clerk.

CLLR HYAMS advised that the sluice at Mill Yard car park could be closed temporarily to facilitate repair work. He would keep all Cllrs advised when he knew more.

THE NEXT COUNCIL MEETING WILL BE HELD ON 18 MARCH 2010 IN THE TOWN HALL

The meeting ended at 10.57am Mayor