

GODMANCHESTER TOWN COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING HELD IN THE
TOWN HALL ON THURSDAY 20 MAY 2010

PRESENT: D BROWN: Town Mayor
Councillors: T CANT, Mrs FLETCHER; C HYAMS, A MARTIN, Ms D MIDDLETON, N PAULEY, C RICHARDSON, D TAYLOR, C VANE PERCY, N WELLS, A WELTON, G WILSON, Mrs S WORTHINGTON.

Town Clerk: Mrs M LIDDIARD
Mace Bearer: Mr F CARTER

9 members of the public were in attendance

THE MAYOR invited Reverend Busk to lead the Council in prayer.

ACTION

10/72 ELECTION OF TOWN MAYOR

CLLR ALAN WELTON was formally elected as Town Mayor for the year 2010 to 2011.

10/73 TO RECEIVE THE MAYOR'S DECLARATION OF ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE

CLLR WELTON duly signed and read his Declaration of Acceptance of Office, which was witnessed by the Town Clerk as Proper Officer.

10/74 ELECTION OF DEPUTY TOWN MAYOR

CLLR MRS SUSAN WORTHINGTON was formally elected as Deputy Town Mayor for the year 2010 to 2011.

10/75 TO RECEIVE THE DEPUTY MAYOR'S DECLARATION OF ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE

CLLR MRS WORTHINGTON signed and read her Declaration of Acceptance of Office which was witnessed by the Town Clerk as Proper Officer.

10/76 OUTGOING MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

CLLR BROWN said it had been an honour and a challenge to fill the role of Mayor, following Malcolm Cohen's resignation after 9 months in office. He had found the role interesting and enjoyable and he believed we worked well together. CLLR BROWN was pleased to continue to support Malcolm Cohen's chosen charities of Help for Heroes and The New Life Appeal at Hinchingsbrooke Hospital and confirmed that during the year over £3000 had been raised for these two charities.

CLLR BROWN mentioned successes and highlights throughout the year which had included refurbishment of the War Memorial, replacement of the Chinese Bridge, a new initiative for members of the public to meet the Councillors in an informal setting and the possibility of considering production of a Parish Plan.

CLLR BROWN thanked office staff, the Mace Bearer and fellow Councillors for their support over the year and wished his successor good fortune and continued support in the year ahead.

The outgoing Mayor and the Newly Elected Mayor and Deputy Mayor left the room and were escorted into the room in procession led by the Mace Bearer.

10/77 TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES AND REASONS FOR ABSENCE

CLLR BUTCHER: holiday; CLLR MS MACLEOD: illness;
CLLR MRS HULL: absent (apologies received after the meeting – holiday)

10/78 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

CLLR RICHARDSON: planning matter relating to access to Judith's Field from Roman Way due to his home address; CLLR HYAMS: presentation on the Town Sign as he was on the sub committee; CLLR WILSON: any item relating to the Environment agency as they are his employer; CLLR Mrs FLETCHER: any item relating to Judith's Field as Mr Ireson junior (Judith's son) is a family friend; CLLR BROWN: correspondence relating to protocol as he is

mentioned in the correspondence;

10/79 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of the meeting held on 15th April 2010 were duly APPROVED and signed as a complete and accurate record.

10/80 PRESENTATION FROM 2012 SUB COMMITTEE ON TOWN SIGN

Mr Peter Irving and Mr Ken Savage outlined plans to provide a village sign for Godmanchester to mark 2012. The sub committee had investigated different materials and had concluded that polyurethane was the most suitable being hard wearing and requiring minimum maintenance. A company called Signs of the Times had been invited to produce an artists impression of how the sign could look using images of well known Godmanchester landmarks. It was proposed that the sign should be located centrally in Godmanchester rather than at an entrance and the grassed area on the Causeway, close to the Post Office was the favoured location.

Questions were raised regarding cost of maintenance and insurance and size of images.

Mr Irving and Mr Savage were thanked for attending and for providing such useful information.

10/81 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SESSION:

THE MAYOR was asked by Alan Hooker of the Community Association to draw the numbers for May for the 800 club.

Mr Kynoch commented on the planning application submitted for comment relating to Hemingford Abbots and drew attention to the protected hedge which should not be altered.

Mr Kynoch was disappointed that residents in Post Street had not been asked for their views in relation to correspondence regarding provision of a cycle path on Post Street.

Mr Spencer congratulated the new Mayor and Deputy Mayor on their appointment. He asked that with regard the link between Judith's Field and Roman Way that the Community Association be kept informed of any decisions to change the existing links, as they had an interest in respect of bonfire night and security/access issues.

Reverend Busk confirmed the Tuesday lunch club run by Churches Together in Godmanchester was being well attended, but the team who organised the luncheons would be grateful if word could be spread for more volunteers to come forward to help set up/clear up particularly with the heavier lifting.

10/82 TOWN MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS:

THE MAYOR offered condolences to CLLR MARTIN and CLLR HYAMS on recent family bereavements.

THE MAYOR thanked his predecessor for ably manning the role of MAYOR for the past three months. He was full of admiration for CLLR BROWN and was pleased to present him with a Former Mayor's badge.

THE MAYOR said that we had an interesting situation with the Government being formed with a Conservative/Liberal Democrats pact and he hoped Godmanchester Town Council as an apolitical body would work together to achieve the best for the town.

All Cllrs

THE MAYOR confirmed his charities for the year would be East Anglia Air Ambulance, Woodlands Ward at Hinchingsbrooke Hospital and Scouting and Guiding in Godmanchester. The split of funds raised would be 40%/40%/20% respectively. He hoped Cllrs would support him in his fund raising efforts during the year.

THE MAYOR advised the formal opening ceremony of the Chinese Bridge would take place on Friday 11th June. CLLR HYAMS and CLLR PAULEY confirmed the time would be 6.30pm. Cllrs were asked if they would like to attend. CLLR HYAMS and CLLR WILSON confirmed they would be attending in their District and County capacities and CLLR BROWN and CLLR VANE PERCY confirmed they would like to attend.

THE MAYOR advised he would like to formally review the list of Cllrs portfolios (or responsibilities) at the next full Town Council meeting.

All Cllrs

CLLR BROWN confirmed that he had represented the town on 6 occasions since the last meeting. CLLR HYAMS had represented the town on 1 occasion since the last meeting.

10/83 TOWN CLERK'S REPORT ON MATTERS ARISING:

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

Town Clerk would remind CLLR Mrs HULL that a progress report was required on the issue of replacing bulbs on The Avenue.

Town Clerk/
Cllr Hull

CLLR VANE PERCY was asked to enquire when the repaired front door lock for the Town Hall might be returned.

Cllr Vane Percy

10/84 APPROVAL OF CONTENT OF LETTER TO EXECUTORS OF MR W LOOKER

Subject to minor amendment, the draft letter to the Executors of Mr Looker was APPROVED. The letter asks for approval to begin enquiries into siting a Multi Use Games Area on Judith's Field. The Town Clerk would ensure the letter was sent.

Town Clerk

10/85 DISTRICT/COUNTY COUNCIL REPORTS

CLLR WILSON confirmed that following a review of speeds on the A1198 it was proposed to not take any action on the stretch of A1198 from the A14 roundabout to Bearscroft Farm.

CLLR WILSON confirmed he would be attending a meeting with CLLR DUTTON on 27th May to follow up on Highways matters. If anyone had any issues, please advise him.

CLLR PAULEY commented that following the upgrade of the traffic signals on Cambridge Street (near the White Hart public house) there had been an increase in accidents at the junction of East Chadley Lane.

CLLR HYAMS confirmed he had been re-elected to represent Godmanchester on Huntingdonshire District Council.

CLLR HYAMS advised he had an initial price for installation of CCTV of £3500. This would cover the 2 play areas and the car park. It was suggested the next Judith's Field working party could consider this proposal in more detail.

THE MAYOR asked the District and County representatives if, in future, they could provide a short written brief prior to the meetings in order to try to reduce the length of meetings.

Cllr Wilson/
Cllr Hyams

10/86 FINANCIAL/ACCOUNTS

Town Clerk advised that CLLR BROWN had refunded the Town Council £127 in respect of the Mayoral Purse unspent during his period in office. He confirmed he had not claimed for any mileage for the events he had attended. It was AGREED that future Mayors should note their mileage and claim where appropriate.

10/86.1 Details of salary payments had been provided for all Cllrs but it was noted that full details no longer appear on the schedule of payments. It was AGREED that this system was acceptable.

10/86.2 The list of payments to be made in Appendix B was approved.

10/86.3 Councillors received a copy of the Petty Cash Reconciliation for the period to 20th May 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.

10/86.4 Temporary cover for Caretaker's holidays was discussed and it was AGREED that if a suitable person could be found, he or she could be appointed on an ad hoc basis to cover caretaker's duties if the caretaker for either Queen Elizabeth School or Judith's Field was taking a holiday of 5 days or more. The Town Clerk also asked that a Personnel working party be formed to consider the working hours of the caretaking staff. CLLR FLETCHER agreed to lead on this matter and CLLR MRS WORTHINGTON, CLLR RICHARDSON, CLLR MARTIN and CLLR MS MIDDLETON agreed to assist.

Cllr Fletcher

10/86.5 The Town Clerk asked to attend a training seminar on 18th June on HR and Health & Safety issues at a cost of £25. This was APPROVED. **Town Clerk's note: CLLR Ms MIDDLETON was due to attend the CPALC training course on 27th May at a cost of £35 but was unable to attend. As the cost of her training had been previously approved, she will attend the SLCC training seminar on 18th June at the same cost: £35.**

Town Clerk

CLLR VANE PERCY left AT 9.37pm

10/87 CORRESPONDENCE

THE MAYOR confirmed that following receipt of an email from CLLR DUTTON on the issue of following protocol, he had, in his capacity as Secretary of the Godmanchester Conservative Association written to Party Headquarters to complain about the tone of the email. He had not received a reply to date. Following discussion, it was AGREED that in future, District and County Council representatives would be invited to events taking place in Godmanchester, arranged by the Town Council.

All Cllrs

CLLR CANT left AT 10.04pm

10/87.1 A request had been made to hold a fun fair on Judith's Field in June. Following discussion it was AGREED that the new planting as part of the Play Pathfinder scheme was vulnerable and it would not be advisable to have large numbers of people on the field at night time when the plants could not be protected. Town Clerk would advise the fun fair owner but suggest they reapply next year.

Town Clerk

10/87.2 Chinese Bridge – discussed as part of Mayor's Announcements.

10/87.3 Management of email correspondence: CLLR WELLS suggested a scheme to manage the quantity of emails sent and received to Cllrs by allowing access to emails through a portal. Those interested in trying this system should contact him in the first instance.

All Cllrs

Further issues about email correspondence were discussed as the Town Clerk had been copied into responses from the Environment Agency to emails generated by CLLR HYAMS who had not copied the Town Clerk into the original message. It was felt that as the proposed flood defence scheme was of relevance and interest to the Town Council that the Town Office should be copied into all email correspondence. CLLR HYAMS advised that he was writing in his District Council capacity and therefore it was private and not for Town Council information. He would advise the Environment Agency that he did not want the Town Office copied into replies to his enquiries.

Cllr Hyams

CLLR HYAMS also asked why email correspondence was not listed as correspondence on the list appended to the agenda and circulated to all Cllrs. In particular he referred to an email sent to the Town Clerk from HDC providing some costs in respect of running the public toilets. The Town Clerk advised she had forwarded this information to CLLR Mrs WORTHINGTON who was starting to gather information relating to costs involved and that this was partial information only. It was AGREED that a protocol should be considered and adopted for this issue.

10/88 PROPERTY MATTERS

10/88.1 It was AGREED that more information was needed in order to move forward on the issue of public conveniences. The petition organised by the Community Association would be passed to HDC requesting them to reconsider their decision to close the public toilets in Godmanchester. CLLR HYAMS has had discussions with officers at HDC and offered the possibility of the toilets being open for Gala weekend if the Town Council took responsibility for them for that period. CLLR MRS WORTHINGTON has started to gather information, and will liaise with CLLR HYAMS to meet with HDC to discuss options available and costs involved. Initial findings are that we do not have the manpower available to manage this resource and it was also noted that Government proposals might result in a freeze in Council Tax for the following financial year, which would have implications on budgets for HDC and Godmanchester Town Council. In the meantime it was AGREED to hold a Property Working Party to discuss the issue in more detail.

Cllr Worthington/
Cllr Hyams

Cllr Worthington

10/88.2 Investigations have begun to try to determine why the floor in the Queen Elizabeth School rises from time to time as a result of damp, but not at specific times of heavy rainfall or high river levels. CLLR BROWN is liaising with the contractor, David Stokes (who holds information about the refurbishment of the QES) and the Town Clerk. It was AGREED that should a surveyor be required the District Council should be approached in the first instance for their assistance.

Cllr Brown/
Town Clerk

CLLR WILSON left at 11.35pm

10/89 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.

Town Clerk

CLLR WELLS advised there were 3 areas in question in respect of access issues to Judith's Field from Roman Way/Bascraft Way. Because of the lateness of this discussion, it was AGREED to carry the matter forward to the June Town Council meeting.

Cllr Wells/
All Cllrs

CLLR WELLS had prepared a response to Mr White's letter requesting a review of the provision

of a cycle path on Post Street. It was AGREED to send this letter and CLLR WELLS was thanked for his diligence.

Town Clerk

CLLR Mrs FLETCHER left at 11.53pm

MISCELLEANOUS

CLLR Ms MIDDLETON asked that the Grounds Maintenance Contractor be asked to trim the bmx track at Judith's Field.

Town Clerk

CLLR Ms MIDDLETON advised that if any Cllr was interested in reading Police information about harassment/hate crime; she had information available and would pass it to the Town Office.

All Cllrs

CLLR BROWN asked whether clearance of the Mill Steps had been included in the Grounds Maintenance contract. He was advised it had not, and he therefore confirmed he would approach the Community Payback Team to enquire whether they would be able to undertake the task.

Cllr Brown

CLLR Mrs WORTHINGTON advised that new Standing Orders needed to be adopted. Town Clerk would liaise with CLLR WILSON in the first instance.

Town Clerk/
Cllr Wilson

CLLR WELLS suggested that as well as their own portfolio responsibilities (to be reviewed in June 2010) each Cllr should take on regular attendance at one other working party's meetings to ensure better attendance.

All Cllrs

CLLR TAYLOR advised the Brownies had made 12 nesting boxes which would be sited at Judith's Field. He asked that the Town Clerk write to the group to thank them for their continued support and involvement.

Town Clerk

CLLR PAULEY asked that the Coop be contacted and asked to ensure regular litter picks be carried out around their shop. This has not happened recently.

Town Clerk

CLLR HYAMS asked whether the Town Council knew the building contractors at the London Road site, were parking on the access road to the Cemetery and causing obstruction to funeral parties attending the cemetery. Town Clerk would liaise with contractors to ensure funeral parties were not inconvenienced.

Town Clerk

CLLR HYAMS confirmed he would attend the a14 pre public inquiry on behalf of the town council on 24th May. No other councillor indicated their intention to attend.

**THE NEXT COUNCIL MEETING WILL BE AN EXTRAORDINARY
TOWN COUNCIL MEETING AND WILL BE HELD ON 10 JUNE 2010 IN
THE QUEEN ELIZABETH SCHOOL**

The meeting ended at 00.06pm

Mayor