

GODMANCHESTER TOWN COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING HELD IN THE
TOWN HALL ON THURSDAY 19 AUGUST 2010

PRESENT: A WELTON: Town Mayor
Councillors: Mrs S WORTHINGTON (Deputy Mayor), D BROWN, R BUTCHER, Ms J MacLEOD, A MARTIN; Ms D MIDDLETON, N PAULEY, C RICHARDSON, C VANE PERCY, N WELLS, G WILSON

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

5 members of the public were in attendance

10/122 TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES AND REASONS FOR ABSENCE

ACTION

CLLR CANT: holiday; CLLR Mrs FLETCHER: family commitment; CLLR HYAMS; attending HDC meeting; CLLR TAYLOR: holiday; CLLR Mrs HULL: absent – apologies received after meeting

10/123 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:

CLLR Ms MIDDLETON: items relating to Wood Green as has friends working there;
CLLR WILSON: items relating to Environment Agency as they employ him, and matters relating to CCC; CLLR VANE PERCY: item relating to Flood Alleviation Scheme as he is the land owner adjacent to the Mill Race.

10/124 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

CLLR WILSON asked for items to be clarified in relation to minute 10/115. His comments are included under District/County Council reports under item 10/128. The Minutes of the meeting held on 15th July 2010 were duly APPROVED and signed as a complete and accurate record.

10/125 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SESSION:

A resident from The Avenue stated the cottages adjacent to Cooks Bridge had never flooded and she was appalled that the Town Council could consider sanctioning expenditure on the flood alleviation scheme, which she did not believe was needed.

A resident from The Causeway expressed concern that a planning application for 16 The Causeway seemed to have been withdrawn from HDC's current list of applications but residents who may be affected by this had not been contacted. He felt better communication from HDC was essential.

The Mayor drew the numbers for the August 800 club draw.

10/126 TOWN MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS:

THE MAYOR advised he had represented the town on 6 occasions since the last meeting and the DEPUTY MAYOR on 2 occasions.

THE MAYOR advised that Barclays Bank had instructed the Town Clerk that if the Town Mace was withdrawn from the bank, it would have to be removed from its custom-made box and the box left in the bank, or they would not be willing to accept its return. Clearly this is unacceptable, as the Mace needs to be kept safe while at the bank but also in transit and removing it from its box was not an option. The Town Clerk had therefore removed the Town Mace in the box from the bank. It was AGREED that alternative banking arrangements would be made and accounts with Barclays would be closed in due course.

Town Clerk

THE MAYOR advised that our meetings were finishing far too late and he asked all Cllrs to keep their comments brief and to the point in an effort to finish no later than 10.30pm

All Cllrs

10/127 TOWN CLERK'S REPORT ON MATTERS ARISING:

Town Clerk confirmed a cheque had been received in respect of the cost of 2 bags of bulbs to be planted along The Avenue.

Remembrance Day: Town Clerk confirmed CCC had AGREED to close The Avenue/Post Street for the procession to the War Memorial, for the 2 minutes silence and for the procession returning to the Town Hall. We have also requested the traffic be stopped during short prayers, but this has yet to be confirmed.

CLLR Ms MIDDLETON confirmed approval of the draft for the next newsletter would be postponed until the September meeting. Any remaining articles to be sent to her as soon as possible.

All Cllrs

CLLR Ms MIDDLETON confirmed her husband was working on the Town Council website and hoped to have a draft available for Town Council consideration early in September.

CLLR BUTCHER reminded everyone that a town litter pick would take place on Saturday 25th September. Posters would be placed around town to advise residents and shops would be invited to participate.

All Cllrs

10/128 DISTRICT/COUNTY COUNCIL REPORTS

No report received on District Council matters.

CLLR WILSON asked for the following comments to be recorded in respect of comments made at the previous Town Council meeting under item 10/115 on the closure of the toilets by HDC. The minutes of the last Town Council meeting contains the following "He (Cllr Hyams) confirmed that as a result of an independent cross party review the HDC Overview and Scrutiny Panel had looked at HDC's finances and budget on 11 June 2009 and made the recommendation that led to the decision to close the toilets."

CLLR WILSON requested the Town Council write to HDC to ask which local services they may want to transfer to town/town council's in future.

Town Clerk

CLLR WILSON confirmed the discussions that had been held in respect of road closures for the Remembrance Day service. CCC had confirmed that if we wanted to close the road for the duration of the service we would have to fund the cost of road diversion routes, which would be in the region of £2,500. This is because a road closure through Godmanchester would mean diversion notices from as far back as Fenstanton to Spittals roundabout. If Cllrs felt this was an appropriate use of our precept we could include it in the budget for the following year.

It was agreed that for this year CLLR WILSON and the Town Clerk should seek a road closure for the 2 minutes silence, last post and prayers.

Cllr Wilson/
Town Clerk

CLLR WILSON asked that the Town Clerk record in the minutes that a response had been provided to the HDC's consultation on possible sites for Gypsies and Travellers (G&Ts). One site in Hunts was on the proposed new development for 800 homes at Bearscroft farm. The Town Council had responded by reiterating its opposition to the housing development but added that if it proceeded, it was appropriate to make provision for G&Ts on the site.

10/129 CORRESPONDENCE

CLLR BUTCHER advised that HDC had offered to share the costs of replacing older litter-bins in Godmanchester. CLLR BUTCHER considered as the Environment Agency proposals included replacing litter bins as part of the overall flood alleviation scheme, it

would be wise to postpone this initiative at this time.

Town Clerk

Local Referendums: a formal response to HDC's letter would be prepared by the MAYOR and DEPUTY MAYOR, in line with CPALC's views.

Clr Welton/
Clr Worthington

CLLR Mrs WORTHINGTON advised that a repair to the chiming mechanism of the church clock was required and costs of £621 were APPROVED.

Town Clerk

CLLR RICHARDSON confirmed that following a reorganisation of mobile library routes, Godmanchester was still well served with regular stops being made at Rectory Gardens, Old Court Hall, Oak Tree Court, McCartney House.

10/130 PROPOSED FLOOD DEFENCE FOR GODMANCHESTER

Peta Denham, John Hesp, Richard Chubb, Philip Ayres were in attendance representing the Environment Agency and Atkins. The Environment Agency had presented the Town Council with various options and proposals for the public realm areas of the land at either end of The Causeway, the rear of the Town Hall, the area around the sluice at Mill Yard. Cllrs had considered these proposals in advance of the meeting and CLLR PAULEY outlined the Town Council's views.

A copy of the Town Council's report would be forwarded to the Environment Agency who would follow up various queries relating to how the discharge from the oil interceptors would be dealt with, ownership and responsibility for railings on The Causeway, species and locations of street trees, provision of sympathetic and rustic railings at the Mill Yard sluice, confirmation of responsibility for railings at Mill Yard.

Town Clerk

It was confirmed that the recent trials of plastic piling had not proved satisfactory as a solution for the strata in Godmanchester. The gravel and clay had prevented the piling being driven deep enough and it was envisaged metal piling would need to be used in areas where piling was required.

Following comments last month about faulty materials used in the Hemingford's flood defences, which were now beginning to crumble it was confirmed that the bricks used had not been as frost resistant as they needed to be. Class A frost resistant bricks would be used in Godmanchester.

A public exhibition would be held in the Queen Elizabeth School on Friday 17th September from 9.30am to 8.30pm and on Sunday 19th September from 9am to 6pm. The Environment Agency had advised the Government has placed restrictions on them in terms of advertising, marketing and hire of venues and they have made a request to use the QES free of charge on 17th and 19th September 2010. This was AGREED, although CLLR Mrs WORTHINGTON and CLLR PAULEY did not support this decision.

Town Clerk

10/131 FINANCIAL/ACCOUNTS

10/131.1 The list of payments to be made in Appendix B was approved.

10/131.2 Councillors received a copy of monthly salary information, the Petty Cash Reconciliation for the period to 19th August 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.

10/131.3 It was AGREED to instruct Wicksteed Leisure to carry out a quarterly inspection of the Play Pathfinder play area at a cost of £40 per inspection.

Town Clerk

10/131.4 It was AGREED to seek 2 further quotes for the removal of 2 trees in the churchyard.

Town Clerk

10/132 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

10/132.1 CLLR WILSON had circulated a draft letter regarding the revocation of Regional Strategies. It was AGREED this response should be forwarded to HDC.

Town Clerk

CLLR VANE PERCY commented on two tree preservation orders, one he believed was useful and should be endorsed at Pipers Lane/Earning Street, the other at Park Lane was less essential. CLLR VANE PERCY also questioned why a healthy large horse chestnut tree had been removed from the grounds of the Community Primary School and it appeared no consultation or permission had been sought. Town Clerk would make enquiries.

Town Clerk

All Cllrs had received a copy of a letter regarding gritting. CCC would like a list of local farmers who might be able to help during times of adverse weather and Town Clerk would contact our local farmers to ask whether they would permit their names to be put forward. **Town Clerk's note: A list of the addresses of the farms in Godmanchester has been provided for CCC who can contact the occupiers directly.**

Town Clerk

An interim response would be sent to those residents who had made enquiries regarding the fencing issues at Roman Way/Judith's Field. CLLR WELLS would forward his draft to the Town Clerk.

Cllr Wells/
Town Clerk

10/133 WORKING PARTY REPORTS

10/133.1 CLLR Mrs WORTHINGTON had produced a report on property matters. CLLR BROWN confirmed the current position regarding the raised floor in the Queen Elizabeth School. It was AGREED that a company should be appointed to survey the drains at a cost not to exceed £350. It was AGREED that temporary plasterboard should replace the black polythene in the QES and CLLR BROWN confirmed he would undertake this task. The costs of materials were APPROVED. CLLR BROWN would confirm with David Stokes and NLS builders that the proposed work he had discussed with them was not approved and it was AGREED that CLLR VANE PERCY would supply the name of someone who could advise on listed building roof issues. CLLR BROWN also recommended that the sundial located on the QES be refixed at the earliest opportunity as the brackets were becoming loose. CLLR Mrs WORTHINGTON confirmed HDC had rejected the petition submitted to them in respect of re-opening the public toilets. CPALC were arranging a meeting with the market towns who had been affected by this initiative, to be held on 9th September. In the meantime, at a recent meeting held with Malcolm Sharp, Director of Environmental and Community Services HDC, the Town Council had asked whether HDC would consider continuing to manage the facility if the Town Council were able to finance the contract. We await their response.

Town Clerk

Cllr Brown

Cllr Vane Percy

10/133.2 CLLR PAULEY presented a report on the Open Cllr meeting held on 17th July. It was suggested that the next meeting be held on 2nd October to discuss future facilities for Judith's Field (including the MUGA) and to also consider the issue of funding for the Public Toilets. This would be carried forward to the next Town Council meeting.

10/133.3 CLLR Ms MIDDLETON presented a report on Judith's Field Facilities.

Cllr Vane Percy left at 10.35pm

10/134 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, the Press and Public be excluded from the meeting.

10/135 PERSONNEL

CLLR WILSON presented the report on behalf of CLLR Mrs FLETCHER. The following recommendations were APPROVED: To appoint two part time caretakers – one to work 4 days at Judith's Field and 1 day at Queen Elizabeth School. The other to work 3 days at Judith's Field. To reduce the working week of the QES caretaker from 7 days per week to 6 days per week. Town Clerk would write to all concerned.

Town Clerk

To choose an insurance company to administer and provide a pension scheme, if any employee requested access to a pension scheme.

10/136 PUBLIC BODIES (Admission to Meetings) ACT 1960 RE-ADMITTANCE OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

It was resolved that the confidential business having been concluded, the Press and Public be re-admitted to the meeting.

10/137 COUNCILLORS RESPONSIBILITIES/PORTFOLIOS

THE MAYOR put forward proposals to re-distribute some of the responsibilities and portfolios. These proposals were APPROVED. Town Clerk would forward an updated list.

MISCELLEANOUS

It was AGREED that a Finance Working Party would be held on 7th September. All Cllrs invited to attend.

CLLR RICHARDSON thanked all those who had sponsored him for his charity fun-run. He had raised £162.

CLLR WILSON advised there was a possible threat to the on-going funding for the Youth Club held in Godmanchester. He would liaise with CLLR Mrs HULL to find out more.

Cllr Wilson/
Cllr Hull

CLLR Ms MACLEOD had received a detailed briefing from Huntingdon CAB about their work. She urged the Town Council not to reduce financial support to them, as several of the CAB's clients were Godmanchester residents.

CLLR WELLS advised that Planning working parties would move from Wednesday's to Thursdays and from Judith's Field to QES in order to accommodate a regular booking at Judith's Field. Town Clerk would re-issue meeting dates.

Town Clerk

THE MAYOR had raised the question of approaching SITA in respect of a grant application for the provision of a new building at Judith's Field. CLLR BROWN suggested plans and drawings should be reviewed to ensure we had a suitable understanding of our aspirations.

THE NEXT COUNCIL MEETING WILL BE HELD ON 16 SEPTEMBER 2010 IN THE TOWN HALL

The meeting ended at 11.06pm

Mayor