

**MINUTES OF THE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING HELD
ON-LINE AT 19.00 ON THURSDAY 15TH APRIL 2021**

PRESENT: R TAPLIN (Town Mayor)
Councillors: Mrs S WORTHINGTON (Deputy Mayor); Mrs S CONBOY, J HLADKIWSKYJ; A HOOKER; C HYAMS; P IRVING; P MORGAN; Mrs M RADFORD; P ROUND; C THOMAS; C VANE PERCY; G WILSON; Mrs S WILSON; J YOUNG

Town Clerk: Ms V PRYCE
Minute Taker: Mrs C WHITLOCK

One member of the public

MINUTES

Action

The MAYOR advised that Reverend David Busk had been asked to join the Council to say a few words/a prayer following the recent passing of HRH Prince Philip, The Duke of Edinburgh. The Council then observed a one minute's silence as a mark of respect.

21/61 TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES AND REASONS FOR ABSENCE:

Cllr G Campbell – Apologies received

Cllr R Mahmood – Received (due to an overseas family commitment he would not be able attend meetings for the time being)

The TOWN CLERK minuted the meeting until Mrs C Whitlock joined the meeting at 19.30 due to technical issues.

21/62 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:

Cllrs G WILSON, S WILSON and RADFORD – Allotment Association (Holders)

21/63 MINUTES:

The MAYOR proposed the Council approve, as a correct record, the minutes of the Town Council meeting held on 18th March 2021. All were in favour and it was so **resolved**.

21/64 TOWN MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Relatively quiet month in terms of civic duties. The Mayor and Mayoress would be attending the Choral Evensong at Ely Cathedral in thanksgiving for HRH Prince Philip's life.

Mayor

21/65 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SESSION:

Mr Wiggam attended the meeting and addressed the Council regarding the planning application proposed at Cow Lane.

Cllr Young brought to the attention of the Council the fact that 1st April 2022 would be the 40th Anniversary of the Civic Parish of Godmanchester and the first meeting of the Council was held on 1st April 1982. He knew of two founder members of the Council and felt it would be good to mark the anniversary next year.

The Club 800 Draw took place with the assistance of the Mayoress.

Signed as a true copy of the minutes: (Mayor)

Date:

21/66 OUTSTANDING ACTIONS:

Cllr THOMAS advised the entry about the Mill Steps should be shortened to only include recent actions, and that the last note about maintenance of the topside of the Mill Steps was incorrect. However, they had said that they hoped that this would be taken over by a community group and asked that Council consider that aspect. HDC had informed the Council that emergency vehicles could continue to access the recreation ground during the works. The MAYOR noted the article in the Hunts Post that related to the project.

Cllr HOOKER advised that the planning decision for Sky World was due on the 19th April.

21/67 CORRESPONDENCE:

A list of correspondence was noted.

21/68 FINANCIAL AND ACCOUNTS:

The list of payments were approved and would be authorised by the MAYOR and Cllr WORTHINGTON. Cllr MORGAN queried the water rates and asked if the Council were metered for water as the QES only paid £30 which included the public toilets, but Judith's Field was £87 when the building was closed. Cllr MORGAN also queried the electricity bill at the Nursery, the TOWN Clerk advised that this was the first bill since the Council took over the site, but that staff were seeking more competitive pricing.

The Mayor
and Cllr
Worthington

21/69 BUSINESS AND FINANCE REPORT:

Cllr THOMAS asked if there were any questions on the items to note on the portfolio paper. He advised that the newsletter had been circulated to Council and awaited the balance sheet which was in hand with the TOWN CLERK. Cllr THOMAS requested that once the balance sheet had been attached that Cllr HYAMS handed the information to the MAYOR for his approval to print. Cllr G WILSON asked the TOWN CLERK to advise Cllr HYAMS how many planning applications had been received throughout the year.

Cllr Hyams,
the Mayor
and the Town
Clerk

Cllr THOMAS advised that once three quotations had been received for the Nursery buildings the group would return to Council for deliberation and decision.

Mrs WHITLOCK joined the meeting at 19.30 and commenced taking the minutes.

Cllr THOMAS confirmed that the organisers of the Town Show had approached the Council requesting the use of the Godmanchester Community Nursery for their 2021 show on 25 September. The Business Group had reviewed the appropriate Council policies and the Nursery Business Plan, and had received full support and agreement from the Nursery Manager. The MAYOR recommended that Council approve that, subject to Covid safety regulations, the Godmanchester Community Nursery should host the 2021 Town Show on 25 September. The majority were in favour and it was so **resolved**.

Town Clerk

Cllr THOMAS advised that next year marked the HM The Queen's Platinum Jubilee. Godmanchester Community Association (GCA) had requested the Council's involvement in a Working Group in order to celebrate the event on 6

Signed as a true copy of the minutes:

(Mayor)

Date:

February 2022. Cllr YOUNG had indicated his willingness to be involved in the project. It was suggested that the new MAYOR be involved in the deliberations. The MAYOR recommended that Council approve the formation of a small working party under the leadership of Cllr YOUNG to join the Godmanchester Platinum Jubilee Working Group. All were in favour and it was so **resolved**.

Cllr Young

Cllr THOMAS recalled the delivery problems the Council initially had regarding the distribution of the last Newsletter. He confirmed that the Council had been approached by "Chris' Local Leaflet Distribution", a registered Peterborough based Company which would guarantee distribution of a Council Newsletter to all homes in Godmanchester - at a time of the Council's choosing - for a net cost of around £395. The TOWN CLERK in her role as the Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) had been in contact with the company and would support this trial. In order to cover those more remote properties/farms in the Town (approximately 15 dwellings), the Town Office would post the Annual Report and future Newsletters to those households. The MAYOR recommended that Council approve the use Chris' Local Leaflet Distribution for delivery of the Annual Report in early May and that the Town Office post the additional 15 copies. All were in favour and it was so **resolved**.

Town Clerk

Cllr THOMAS confirmed that holding decision-making public meetings remotely expired on 7 May. After this date, all decision-making Council meetings would need to be face-to-face and provide a facility for public attendance. The decision was being contested at the High Court, however, the assumption was for the decision to be upheld. Unfortunately, the Council was not able to hold such meetings within the Covid safety guidelines until 21 June. Therefore, the Business Group was proposing a number of actions which would keep the Council both legal and safe;

1. The mandatory Annual Council Meeting to take place virtually on 5 May for the statutory purpose of Mayor-Making, with all other non-essential tasks being deferred.
2. The Annual Town Meeting would take place, as already notified, virtually on 11 May, chaired by Cllr Taplin as the former Mayor.
3. Subject to Covid-constraints, the June Town Council Meeting would take place physically on 24 June and would incorporate matters outstanding from 5 May and the public Change of Mayor Ceremony.

The MAYOR recommended that Council approve the three proposals, as suggested by the Business Group, as detailed above. All were in favour and it was so **resolved**.

Cllr THOMAS advised that between the hiatus of 7 May and 21 June, there would be a few routine issues that would require action. The Business Group proposed that temporary authority for necessary routine actions were delegated to the TOWN CLERK who, if required, may also obtain guidance (not authority) from the appropriate Portfolio Chair or the Mayor. The MAYOR recommended that Council approve that the TOWN CLERK was awarded delegated Powers as follows:

The TOWN CLERK is the Responsible Financial Officer and Proper Officer and has authorised authority and responsibility for management within these roles. In

Signed as a true copy of the minutes:

(Mayor)

Date:

addition, the TOWN CLERK has delegated authority in accordance with Standing Orders, Financial Regulations, the Council's Policy Framework, statutory Common Law, existing Contractual Requirements and this Scheme of Delegation to undertake the following matters on behalf of the Council:

- a. Consideration and Processing of Planning Applications in consultation with the Planning Portfolio Group.
- b. Authorisation of Routine Expenditure within the Agreed Town Council Budget
- c. Emergency expenditure up to £2500 outside of the Agreed Budget
- d. To take any decision that cannot be reasonably deferred and must be made to comply with a financial, commercial or statutory deadline.

This delegated authority would commence on 7 May 2021 and cease upon the first physical meeting of the Council thereafter. Although the new MAYOR or MAYORESS would be in place at that time, the current MAYOR confirmed he would be happy to assist if required. All were in favour and it was so **resolved**.

Mayor and
the Town
Clerk

21/70 SELECTION OF TOWN MAYOR AND DEPUTY TOWN MAYOR FOR 2021/22

The TOWN CLERK advised she had received only one nomination for each post. For the position of Mayor, Cllr WORTHINGTON had proposed and Cllr CONBOY had seconded Cllr THOMAS. A vote was taken and the TOWN CLERK confirmed all were in favour and it was so **resolved**. Cllr S WILSON had proposed Cllr HYAMS as Deputy Mayor and seconded by Cllr G WILSON. Following a vote for the proposal, the TOWN CLERK confirmed all were in favour and it was so **resolved**.

21/71 ANNUAL NEWSLETTER

The matter had been discussed under Agenda item 21/69 Business and Finance Report.

21/72 PROPERTY REPORT

In Cllr CAMPBELL's absence, Cllr HLADKIWSKYJ presented the report as follows:

- Judith's Field Pavilion field side entrance had been cleaned and washed.
- The leak at the Town Hall had now been dealt with. A response from HDC was still awaited on whether a defibrillator could be fitted to the QES, being a listed building.
- The Group had agreed that, following the ongoing drainage problems with the public toilet located at QES, a more regular maintenance process was required.
- Cllr RADFORD had compiled a list of suggestions regarding the ongoing litter problem in the Town.
- The Working Group had received a third Multi Wheel Fun Track presentation via zoom and now awaited responses from the TOWN CLERK's requests for references.

Town Clerk

Town Clerk

Cllr HLADKIWSKYJ advised that the installation of the public toilets at Judith's Field was due to commence in May and last approximately a month. The TOWN CLERK reported she had received a request from the contractors for

Town Clerk

Signed as a true copy of the minutes: (Mayor)

Date:

Healthmatic to use the Pavilion whilst working on site. After some discussion it was felt that the contractors should be allowed to use the Pavilion provided the necessary insurance was in place. The contractors would be given a full set of keys to use the building but it would be their responsibility to secure and alarm the building. Healthmatic would also be required to pay for a full clean of the building before handing it back to the Council.

In her role as litter problem co-ordinator, Cllr RADFORD had prepared a report with the view to creating a Cross Party Group to deal with the litter which would report to the Environment Group rather than setting up any additional meetings. The MAYOR recommended that the Council agreed for a Cross Party Working Group to be created which would report to the Environment Portfolio. All were in favour and it was so **resolved**.

Cllr Radford

Cllr HLADKIWSKYJ confirmed that a CCTV Policy had been prepared based on the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR), on information from the Commissioner's Office and the Government's Code of Practice. Cllr HLADKIWSKYJ advised that the Council would have to have legitimate reasons as to why CCTV data should be viewed. For example, a formal request from the Police regarding a crime would have to be made to the Town Office. This would be necessary to ensure that the purpose of the request was documented. As a couple of changes to the policy was still required, the document would be included as an Agenda item at the next Town Council meeting (24 June).

Cllr
Hladkiwskyj

Town Clerk

21/73 PLANNING REPORT:

The TOWN CLERK was to advise HDC of planning application recommendations.

Town Clerk

The MAYOR confirmed that work to deal with the pigeon mess under the bridge on Cambridge Street was due to start at the end of April. The road would be partly closed at first, and then fully closed for a number of weeks to allow work across the whole carriageway to take place. It was scheduled to be completed in May.

Cllr G WILSON reported that Cllr ROUND had presented proposals for an ILH grant at Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC) panel. The informal scoring proposal for the double yellow lines was 'above the line' so was likely to progress to consultation stage after CCC's committee meeting.

21/74 ENVIRONMENT REPORT:

Cllr HOOKER advised that the internal auditor had highlighted the problems of having two different Cemetery charges for residents and non-residents, and the Policy had now been revised. It was noted that the table on the last page of the Policy needed updating with the correct review date; once updated the Policy would be published.

Town Office

Cllr HOOKER confirmed that as the Osier Beds had become more accessible to the public, there was concern that the two entrances were slippery and there were lots of tree stumps to negotiate. The Group felt that a warning sign at each end would be required. The MAYOR recommended that the Council approve the installation of two signs with reduced wording. The majority were in favour and it was so **resolved**. The MAYOR thanked Cllrs HOOKER and IRVING for their work

Cllr Hooker

Signed as a true copy of the minutes:

(Mayor)

Date:

on the Osier Beds and at Portholme and noted that he had received a number of compliments on the improvement to the Town.

Cllr Hyams

21/75 LITTER REPORT:

The matter had been discussed under Agenda item 21/72 Property Report.

The MAYOR closed the meeting to the public and press.

21/76 PERSONNEL REPORT:

Cllr WORTHINGTON advised that office-based staff would not be returning to the office until at least 21st June, depending on Covid restrictions. This was due to the building also being used by the Senior Citizens' Club and would therefore require the sharing of some facilities such as the kitchen and toilet. If staff were to return, modifications to the main office would be required, such as screens. The TOWN CLERK explained that both Huntingdon and St Ives Town Councils had permanently closed their offices to the public on certain days of the week. Cllr WORTHINGTON said that the Committee would need to look into the practicalities of reopening the office and would therefore need to report back to Council with some proposals.

Cllr WORTHINGTON advised that the recruitment of a Town Warden would now go ahead once a slightly different job description had been produced. Another option would be for the current Town Wardens to take on extra duties such as enhanced cleaning on a temporary basis.

Town Clerk

Preliminary discussions had taken place regarding staffing structure. This was due to a reduction in hours by a member of staff with the view to leaving at the end of the year. Suggestions had included recruitment of a Deputy Town Clerk and of a separate RFO role. Cllr WORTHINGTON advised that the Council's Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) contract tendering could possibly be dealt with by an outside body similar to Huntingdon Town Council. The matter would be discussed at the next meeting of the Committee, however, Cllr WORTHINGTON agreed that this would benefit from a wider discussion.

Following the meeting, Cllr WORTHINGTON advised she would circulate the Committee's Terms of Reference but confirmed they were not proposing making any changes.

Cllr
Worthington

Cllr HYAMS thanked Cllr WORTHINGTON for her presentation and wished to express his thanks to the TOWN CLERK for all her hard work. Cllr HYAMS congratulated the TOWN CLERK on how she had dealt with the additional workload and subsequent meetings that had been a result of Covid-19. Cllr HYAMS reminded Councillors that the TOWN CLERK had now been given delegated powers until June and they owed her a great deal of gratitude. The Mayor and Cllr WORTHINGTON echoed Cllr HYAMS' comments and praised the TOWN CLERK and her hardworking team which deserved a 'really big thank you' from the Councillors.

Cllr HLADKIWSKYJ advised that four quotes had been received to redecorate two areas of the Town Hall (following water damage, the Town Clerk's office, and the two halls in the QES. The Group recommended the appointment of Chris Allgood at a cost of £1,410 including VAT.

Town Clerk

Signed as a true copy of the minutes:

(Mayor)

Date:

The MAYOR expressed his sincere congratulations to the Mayor Elect, Cllr THOMAS and the Deputy Mayor Elect, Cllr HYAMS.

The meeting closed at 21.21

Signed as a true copy of the minutes:
Date:

(Mayor)