

**MINUTES OF THE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING HELD IN THE
QUEEN ELIZABETH SCHOOL HALL AT 19.00 ON THURSDAY 9TH DECEMBER 2021**

PRESENT: C THOMAS (Town Mayor)
Councillors: C HYAMS (Deputy Mayor); J HLADKIWSKYJ; P IRVING; A HOOKER; Mrs D MICKELBURGH; P MORGAN; R TAPLIN; C VANE PERCY; G WILSON; Mrs S WILSON; Mrs S WORTHINGTON and J YOUNG

Minute Taker: Mrs C WHITLOCK
Mace Bearer: Mr M WILLIAMS

There were no members of the public in attendance

MINUTES

Action

21/181 TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES AND REASONS FOR ABSENCE:

CLlr R MAHMOOD – apologies received (personal reasons)
CLlr P ROUND – apologies received (family commitment)
CLlr S CONBOY – apologies received (another commitment)
CLlr M RADFORD – apologies received (unwell)
TOWN CLERK – apologies received (unwell)

21/182 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:

CLlr A HOOKER – Planning Application (Football Club member)
CLlr D MICKELBURGH - Planning Application (Football Club member)
CLlr C VANE PERCY – Planning Application (Post Street resident)

21/183 MINUTES:

The MAYOR proposed that Council approved the Minutes of the Town Council meeting held on 18 November 2021. All were in favour and it was so **resolved**.

The Mayor

21/184 TOWN MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS:

The MAYOR and DEPUTY MAYOR had attended multiple events over the previous month. The MAYOR expressed his thanks and congratulations to Cllr CONBOY and her team for enabling the hugely successful Christmas Market.

The MAYOR congratulated Cllr Round and his wife on the safe arrival of their baby daughter.

The MAYOR reported that there was no apparent movement in Huntingdonshire District Council's (HDC) position concerning the outstanding maintenance of the riverbank and the towpath, and the Swimming Steps. The Council had taken initial advice from Solicitors and sought confirmation that they had the appropriate members of staff to represent the Council should the matter go to law. The MAYOR expressed the need for a pragmatic and sensible approach.

The MAYOR advised that Council had agreed at last month's meeting to instruct a

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Date:

Solicitor to respond to the false allegations against the TOWN CLERK and Council concerning the democratic process. The complainant had now sent a conciliatory letter to which the Council had responded and, therefore, a Solicitor's letter would not be pursued at this point.

The Mayor reported that no further contact had been made by a former Councillor regarding access to personal mails held on the Council account.

21/185 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SESSION:

Cllr YOUNG, spoke as a member of the public, and made a request that a small working group be appointed to organise a celebration to mark the 40th anniversary of the Town Council, which would occur on 1 April 2022.

Town Clerk

Cllr YOUNG wished for Council to note that he had previously made a suggestion that, due to the longstanding link the Town had with Westminster, whether a future road could be named using the name Westminster; for example, 'Westminster Way'. The MAYOR advised that the Planning Group would note Cllr Young's suggestion.

Planning Group

As a County Councillor, Cllr G WILSON confirmed he had met with HDC and Cambridgeshire Council highways and flooding representatives to indicate areas within Godmanchester that, following the surface floods in December 2020, still required remedial work. There were actions outstanding and Cllr G WILSON advised he would keep Council notified of the situation.

Also in his capacity as County Councillor, Cllr G WILSON confirmed that he had met with a local resident and had noted a number of points that he raised about disabled access and provisions for pedestrian crossings.

The MAYOR carried out the Club 800 Draw.

21/186 OUTSTANDING ACTIONS:

The MAYOR advised that the TOWN CLERK and the Chairs of the Portfolio Groups had been requested to revise and update the Outstanding Actions in time for next month's meeting.

Town Clerk/Chairs

Cllr G WILSON advised that the Multi Wheel Fun Track (MWFT) had been opened as planned on 27 November and wished to record a note of thanks to the contractors Clark & Ken, t and the Councillors who progressed the work through to completion.

21/187 CORRESPONDENCE:

Cllr HLADKIWSKYJ advised that the Flood Mobile event in Godmanchester was scheduled for 29 January 2022 and asked Council for their preference with regards to the location of the unit. The majority felt that the best position for the unit would be at School Hill/QES. If this proved not to be possible, due to the size of the unit, it should be located at Judith's Field.

Cllr Hladkiwskyj

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(Mayor)

21/188 PLANNING REPORT:

The DEPUTY TOWN CLERK would advise HDC of planning application recommendations.

Deputy
Town Clerk

Cllr HYAMS reminded Council that they had previously recommended refusal of planning application 21/00898/FUL relating to the Sports Pavilion in Bearscroft Lane. However, in light of new information received indicating that no car parking would be lost or gained as a result of the proposal, Cllr HYAMS recommended that Council approve the application. This was seconded by Cllr G WILSON. The majority were in favour and it was so **resolved**.

Cllr HYAMS reported that Council and Bellway (the Developers) had met virtually on 16 November 2021 to discuss Dexter's Farm. However, Bellway had not responded to questions raised at that time by Council. Therefore, Cllr HYAMS proposed that the application should be refused on those grounds. The proposal was seconded by Cllr TAPLIN; all were in favour and it was so **resolved**. (Council to note that Cllr HYAMS AND MICKELBURGH would be attending the HDC Development Management Control meeting at the Burgess Hall, St Ives on 20 December at 7pm)

Cllr G WILSON reported that the Town Office had started to receive completed Transport Surveys which had been circulated with the newsletter the previous week.

Town Office

21/189 ENVIRONMENT REPORT:

Cllr HOOKER reported that though there were no decisions items, there were items to note. A report from Online Playgrounds regarding maintenance work had been received, however, it had not contained estimates for replacing the 'self-closing' gate and the stress test of the basket swing at Judith's Field. Cllr HOOKER advised that boat and blue matting required removing from Queens Walk and replacing. Concerns were raised over new play equipment being located in a conservation area and the option of a hedge had been suggested. The Environment Group had decided to completely review the way forward concerning all matters in the Cemetery.

21/190 FINANCIAL AND ACCOUNTS:

The MAYOR and Council approved the Accounts Payable and the Cash Reconciliation. The list of payments had been emailed to Cllrs WORTHINGTON and TAPLIN for approval and authorisation.

Cllrs
Worthington
and Taplin

21/191 BUSINESS REPORT:

Cllr HLADKIWSKYJ proposed that Council approve the use of the Twinning Budget to enable Huntingdon and Godmanchester Twinning Association (HGTA) to use

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Council facilities for up to 12 hours per year in a maximum of four sessions. The proposal was seconded by Cllr IRVING; the majority were in favour and it was so **resolved**.

Cllr HLADKIWSKYJ proposed that Council approve Godmanchester Charities free use of Council facilities if a regular user was not scheduled at the same time. Council deferred the matter as felt more information was required.

The Mayor

Cllr HLADKIWSKYJ advised that Cambridgeshire Search and Rescue (CAMSAR) had requested a grant of £300. CAMSAR is a not-for-profit charity staffed by unsalaried volunteers who support the emergency services when a person is missing. Cllr HLADKIWSKYJ proposed that Council award CAMSAR the grant of £300. The proposal was seconded by Cllr TAPLIN; all were in favour and it was so **resolved**.

Business
Group to
note

The Town Council resolved to increase the Godmanchester Town element of council tax to be paid on every property by 3.5%.

Town Clerk

The question of additional cameras at Judith's Field continued to be investigated. There had been much improved liaison with the police. The Business Group would continue to monitor the situation.

21/192 PROPERTY REPORT:

In the absence of Cllr RADFORD, Cllr MORGAN briefed Council on the Property Report. Council noted the contents.

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.

21/193 PROPERTY REPORT:

Cllr MORGAN advised that three quotations had been received for minor alterations to the rear of Judith's Field Pavilion.

Cllr MORGAN recommended that Council agree to the quotation from A&K Buildings at the price of £3,780.00 exclusive of VAT. The proposal was seconded by Cllr S WILSON; all were in favour and it was so **resolved**.

21/194 ENVIRONMENT REPORT

Cllr HOOKER advised that three quotations had been received for Category B work identified in the Triennial Tree Survey. Cllr HOOKER noted that Council had previously provisionally agreed the quotation from Drayton Tree Care at the price of £2,750.00 plus VAT. Category A and B work would commence in the New Year.

21/195 PERSONNEL REPORT:

Cllr WORTHINGTON advised that a member of staff had left the Council. Council

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would be recruiting for an additional Administration Officer.

Following the latest guidance regarding Covid, it was agreed that face masks should be worn in the Council's halls and notices to that effect would be displayed. An email to all hirers would be circulated advising them of changes in recommendations. Cllr WORTHINGTON advised that, with effect from Monday 13 December 2021, staff would normally work from home. A single member of staff would be allowed to work in the office if so requested.

Town Office

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.

The MAYOR reported that the use of microphones that had been trialled during the meeting had apparently proved positive, especially the wired system (as opposed to the infrared version). The Property Group would progress this issue.

Property
Group

The MAYOR wished the Council a very Happy Christmas and closed the meeting at 20.39.

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(Mayor)