

**MINUTES AND REPORT OF THE POLICY & MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE
HELD ON 17 NOVEMBER 2011**

* Councillor T Martin – Chairman
* Councillor Wheatley – Vice Chairman

* Councillor P Martin	0	Councillor R Gordon-Smith
* Councillor Poulter	*	Councillor Thomson
0 Councillor C Gordon-Smith	*	Councillor Lister
* Councillor Reynolds	*	Councillor Wilson
* Councillor Woodham	*	Councillor A Bott
0 Councillor S Bott	*	Councillor Hunter
* Councillor Noyce	0	Councillor Robinson
* Councillor Thornton	#	Councillor Welland
* Councillor Williams		

* Present # Absent & no apology received 0 Apology L Late

248. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 6 October 2011, having been previously circulated, were signed by the Chairman as a true record.

249. PETITIONS/STATEMENTS/QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

Mr J Inman of 15 Shadyhanger had applied to make a statement in accordance with Standing Order 80. The Chairman determined to take that statement at the relevant point on the agenda.

250. DISCLOSURE OF PERSONAL AND PREJUDICIAL INTERESTS

Councillor P Martin declared a personal interest in Agenda Item 10 on the grounds that he is a Member of Surrey County Council and a Member of the Surrey County Council Cabinet. Councillor Martin remained in the Chamber while that agenda item was debated.

Councillor Thomson declared a personal & prejudicial interest in Agenda Item 5 on the grounds that she is a resident of Shadyhanger. Councillor Thomson moved to the public gallery in order to hear Mr Inman’s statement and Members’ questions of Mr Inman and left the Chamber thereafter while the item was debated.

Councillor Wheatley declared a personal interest in Agenda Item 11 on the grounds that she is the Town Council’s representative on the Godalming Fairtrade Town Steering Group. Councillor Wheatley remained in the Chamber while that agenda item was debated.

Councillor Wheatley declared a further personal interest in Agenda Item 12 on the grounds that she is the Town Council’s representative on the Godalming/Mayen Association. Councillor Wheatley remained in the Chamber while that agenda item was debated.

Councillor Wilson declared a personal interest in Agenda Item 15 on the grounds that he is a trustee of the Henry Smith Charity. Councillor Wilson remained in the Chamber while that agenda item was debated.

Councillor A Bott declared a personal & prejudicial interest in Agenda Item 10 on the grounds that she is a Director of the Community Interest Company. Councillor Bott left the Chamber while that agenda item was debated.

Councillor A Bott declared a further personal interest in Agenda Item 14 on the grounds that she is a Director of the Community Interest Company. Councillor Bott remained in the Chamber and presented her report and participated in the discussion of that agenda item.

251. NIGHTINGALE CEMETERY STEPS

Members heard a brief statement from Mr J Inman expressing his disappointment about the closure of the steps from Nightingale Cemetery up to Shadyhanger and the failure of the Council/Joint Burial Committee to consult residents before closing the steps. Mr Inman also observed that he and/or other residents of Shadyhanger would make an application to have the route added to Surrey County Council's Definite Map & Statement of Public Rights of Way. Mr Inman further expressed concern about the safety of the existing defined public right of way between Nightingale Cemetery and Bicton Croft.

The Town Clerk reminded Members of the background to this item and why it was an issue properly considered by this Committee. The Godalming Joint Burial Committee (JBC) is a joint committee of Godalming Town Council and of Busbridge Parish Council; it exists to exercise both Council's burial powers but has no other powers. The JBC is not a body corporate and cannot own land, therefore Nightingale Cemetery is owned jointly by the Town Council and Busbridge Parish Council. The JBC has a duty to maintain proper access into the cemetery but no duty to maintain a through route across the cemetery. Having concluded that the predominant use of the steps was as a through route the JBC asked this Committee to consider funding repairs to the steps. Members looked at this matter first on 26 May this year (Minute 40-11 refers) and decided the matter on 15 September after a site visit on 8 September (Minute 170-11 refers). On 29 September, following this Committee's decision not to fund the repairs, the JBC decided to close the steps and its instructions were carried out on 3 October 2011 (JBC Minute 37-11 refers).

Members considered Mr Inman's statement, his earlier letter and another letter from Mr Sinclair of 10 Shadyhanger (copies of both letters attached to the record minutes) and the Town Clerk's advice. Subsequent to Members' questions the Town Clerk further advised that £780 had been spent on fencing off the steps; that work to remove the lower part of the steps and stabilise the slope at its boundary with 29 Shadyhanger would commence on 28 November; and, that, as Clerk to the Godalming Joint Burial Committee, she would advise the JBC to dispute any application to have the route added to Surrey County Council's Definite Map & Statement of Public Rights of Way on the grounds that the route is a permissive path only.

Members resolved that they confirmed their earlier decision not to fund the repairs to the steps, concurred with the subsequent JBC decision to close the steps and agreed that planned work should proceed. However, Members also agreed that they were receptive to the idea of reinstating the steps should an offer of a donation(s) to fund the work be received.

Members further resolved to make representations to Surrey County Council expressing concern about the maintenance and safety of FP12 where it passes between Nightingale Cemetery and Bicton Croft.

252. ACCOUNTS PAID SINCE LAST MEETING & SCHEDULE OF PAYMENTS

	£
Godalming Town Council Accounts paid since the 6 October 2011	37,527.11
Balance held in Current Account Balance at 31 October 2011	12,834.62

Balance held in the Business Deposit Account
Balance at 31 October 2011

314,846.87

A schedule of the accounts paid was tabled for the information of Members. The vouchers relating to these payments were also tabled at the meeting for inspection. All payments made were in line with the agreed budget or other resolution of this Committee or Full Council.

Members agreed that the Chairman should sign the schedule of accounts paid.

253. REVISED ESTIMATES 2011/12 AND BUDGET 2012/13

Members agreed the draft revised Estimates for 2011/12 and the Budget for 2012/13 (copy attached to record minutes) noting that revisions would be made before they considered it again, formally on 5 January 2012.

254. INTERNAL AUDIT REVIEW, AUDIT WORKPLAN AND LETTER OF ENGAGEMENT

Members noted that the interim Internal Audit was conducted on 1 November 2011, by Mark Mulberry (copy attached to the record minutes).

Members received the Interim Audit report, the Internal Audit Workplan for the year 2012/13 and agreed that Mark Mulberry should be reappointed as internal auditor for the year 2012/13 and the Chairman should sign the Letter of Engagement for that year when it was received.

255. EXTERNAL AUDIT – REPORT FROM THE AUDIT SUB COMMITTEE

Members received the report and draft minutes of the Audit Sub Committee meeting held on the 3 October 2011 and the Extraordinary meeting held on the 3 November 2011.

In addition Members received the Annual Return, and the External Auditor's (BDO Stoy Hayward) report relating to Godalming Town Council accounts for the year 2011/12 (copy attached to the record minutes). Members noted that the accounts for the year 2011/12 were unqualified with no matters giving cause for concern that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements have not been met. The Audit Sub Committee and the Responsible Finance Officer were thanked for their work leading to this satisfactory audit report.

Two issues not affecting the audit opinion were raised, the first a note that during the year the value of the Town Council's assets was restated and the second a reminder of the legislative requirements around the keeping of the minutes because some of the copy minutes submitted for audit purposes were not initialled by the Committee Chairman.

The Audit Sub Committee specifically identified new requirements in The Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2011 which came into force on 31 March 2011. There is a significant change in the new regulations, which means that Godalming Town Council can no longer delegate responsibility for financial management to a Committee (Regulation 4). The required annual review of the effectiveness of systems of internal control must be considered by the Full Council.

The Audit Sub Committee reported that it had discussed the implications of this change for Godalming Town Council and considered two options. The first option was to continue with the sub committee undertaking its rolling work programme which is an on-going review of the effectiveness of systems of internal control and making a full report of that review annually to this Committee – to fulfil the new regulatory requirement this Committee would then make its report to the Full Council. The second option considered was to cut this

committee out of the process, this could be achieved by creating the Audit Committee as a standing committee of Full Council (rather than a sub committee of this Committee) and thus have the Audit Committee report directly to Full Council. The Audit Sub Committee reported that it preferred the first option and made the following recommendation to this Committee, for onward recommendation to Full Council:

In order to fulfil its duties under The Accounts and Audit (England) Regulations 2011 Godalming Town Council should consider the Audit Sub Committee's findings from its review of the effectiveness of the systems of internal control at meetings of both the Policy & Management Committee and Full Council by 31 March each year. Specifically this will mean that extraordinary meetings of the Policy & Management Committee and of Full Council are required in March 2012. It is further recommended that these meetings be arranged for the evening of 15 March 2012 with the Policy & Management Committee meeting commencing at 7.15pm (or at the conclusion of the preceding Planning & Environment Committee meeting which ever time is later) and a Full Council meeting commencing at 8pm (or at the conclusion of the preceding Policy & Management Committee meeting which ever time is later).

Members of the Policy & Management Committee accepted the recommendation and resolved to make the same recommendation to Full Council.

Members noted that civic ceremonial need not be observed at an extraordinary meeting of Full Council (Standing Order 38 refers).

256. FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTION TO A CIC PROJECT

Members noted that in 2010/11 the Town Council's budget included £10,000 as a matched-funding contribution towards a project arising from the Godalming Healthcheck; this sum was unspent in that year and was transferred to reserves pending clarity about project timescales. Members further noted that the project was now nearing its deadline and that the Town Council's £10,000 contribution would be more efficiently spent if the Town Council purchased and installed the required benches and noticeboards directly and retained ownership. Following consultation with officers at Waverley Borough Council and Surrey County Council the Town Clerk proposed that the majority of the Town Council's £10,000 should be directed at reworking and renewing the street furniture in the area outside the Slug & Lettuce with a smaller sum being spent on an additional bench outside Waitrose – facing the Town Council offices/Borough Hall and a tourist information board in the vicinity of the putative new Visitor Information Centre (at Godalming Museum) perhaps in the area adjacent to the Old Post Office/Red Lion.

Members noted that more detail was still required but that timescales for completion of the project were now short. Therefore, Members endorsed the approach outlined above and agreed to the expenditure of £10,000 on the relevant street furniture. Exceptionally Members also agreed that a further report on this matter be submitted to the next meeting of the Planning & Environment Committee.

257. GODALMING FAIRTRADE TOWN APPLICATION

Following the presentation to this Committee by the Chairman of the Godalming Fairtrade Town Steering Group on 6 October Members agreed to renew their support for the Fairtrade Town campaign by recommending the following to Full Council.

This Town Council is proud to support the Godalming's Fairtrade Town campaign and will demonstrate its support for that campaign by:

- using Fairtrade, tea, coffee and sugar in all meetings and offices;
- using other Fairtrade products where appropriate;

- promoting awareness of Fairtrade both internally and externally, wherever practically possible, through our website, communications, publications, public notices and signs;
- using our influence to urge local retailers to provide Fairtrade options for residents;
- using our influence to urge local business to offer Fairtrade options to their staff and promote the Fairtrade mark internally; and
- nominating a named council representative (currently Councillor Wheatley) to sit on the Fairtrade Town steering group and support ongoing work to promote Fairtrade.

258. TOWN TWINNING – 30th ANNIVERSARY OF TWINNING WITH MAYEN, GERMANY

Members noted that during a recent visit to Mayen the Town Mayor extended an invitation to the Mayor of Mayen to come to Godalming in 2012 so that the 30th anniversary of the signing of the Twinning Deed may be marked. The Mayor of Mayen has indicated that she would like to come to Godalming over the weekend of the Queen’s Diamond Jubilee (ie. from 2 or 3 June leaving on 5 June). Members agreed that plans will need to be made for a modest event in celebration of the 30th anniversary to be held on the evening of 3 June 2012 (at the conclusion of the planned Songs of Praise at the Bandstand) and noted that the draft 2012/13 budget agreed above (Minute 253-11 above refers) includes an additional sum of £3,400 for this purpose.

259. TITLES OF DIGNITY

Members considered an oral report of the working group set up to consider the issue of Titles of Dignity (Minute 168-11 refers) and agreed a draft Honorary Freeman scheme recommended by the working group with the following sentence to replace the last paragraph:

“The Council to bear in mind the special nature of this award and limit its numbers accordingly.”

Members agreed to recommend the amended scheme to Full Council for adoption.

260. TOWN COUNCIL REPRESENTATION ON EXTERNAL BODIES – REPORT ON GODALMING TOGETHER CIC

Members noted a report from Councillor A Bott on the Godalming Together CIC an organisation on which Councillor Bott represents the Town Council. Members thank Councillor Bott for her report.

261. HENRY SMITH CHARITY - NOMINATION OF A TRUSTEE

Members considered a letter received from the Clerk to the Trustees of the Henry Smith Charity and resolved to recommend to Full Council that Councillor Poulter be re-appointed as one of the Town Council’s nominative trustees on the Henry Smith Charity.

262. TOWN COUNCIL OFFICES – CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR OPENING HOURS

Members agreed that Godalming Town Council Offices should open during the Christmas and New Year period as shown below:

Thursday, 22 December 2011	Normal working hours
Friday, 23 December 2011	Normal working hours
Saturday, 24 December 2011	Closed
Sunday, 25 December 2011	Closed
Monday, 26 December 2011	Closed – Public Holiday
Tuesday, 27 December 2011	Closed – Public Holiday

Wednesday, 28 December 2011	Closed – Extra statutory day
Thursday, 29 December 2011	Closed
Friday, 30 December 2011	Closed
Saturday, 31 December 2011	Closed
Sunday, 1 January 2012	Closed
Monday, 2 January 2012	Closed – Public Holiday
Tuesday, 3 January 2012	Normal working hours

Members agreed to grant Town Council staff an additional leave day, as a one-off goodwill gesture, to be taken on 29 December and required that staff take annual leave or “time off in lieu” on 30 December.

Members noted that the Town Clerk will make arrangements with local funeral directors to accommodate any requests for an interment in either of the Joint Burial Committee’s Cemeteries should one arise and will be contactable by mobile ‘phone during office hours on 29 & 30 December.

263. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Policy & Management Committee is scheduled to be held on Thursday, 5 January 2012 at 7.15 pm in the Council Chamber or at the conclusion of the Planning & Environment Committee meeting, whichever is later.

264. ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no announcements.