

PARISH OF GODALMING

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE TOWN COUNCIL

OF THE PARISH OF GODALMING HELD

ON THURSDAY, 21 SEPTEMBER 2023

- * Town Mayor (Cllr Duce)
- * Deputy Town Mayor (Cllr PS Rivers)

- | | |
|-----------------------|-------------------------|
| * Councillor Adam | * Councillor Kiehl |
| * Councillor Clayton | * Councillor Martin |
| * Councillor Crooks | * Councillor PMA Rivers |
| * Councillor Crowe | * Councillor Steel |
| * Councillor Downey | * Councillor Taylor |
| * Councillor Follows | * Councillor Thomson |
| * Councillor Heagin | * Councillor Weightman |
| * Councillor Holliday | * Councillor Williams |

* Present # Absent & No Apology Received 0 Apology for Absence L Late

272. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 20 July 2023 were signed by the Mayor as a correct record.

273. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received and recorded as above.

274. DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS AND NON-PECUNIARY INTERESTS

Councillor Follows declared an other registerable interest in Agenda Item 11 on the grounds that he will be casting the WBC vote for the Godalming BID and remained in the Chamber when that agenda item was debated.

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

No petitions/statements/questions had been received from members of the public in accordance with Standing Order No 5.

276. QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS

No questions from Councillors were submitted in accordance with Standing Order 6.

277. OFFICIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS, LETTERS, ETC

There were none.

278. YOUTH SERVICES ANNUAL REPORT

Members received the 2022/23 Annual Report for the Godalming Youth Services (published on GTC website) and noted the important work being delivered by the Youth Service team. The Youth Services Officer responded to Members' questions.

279. COMMITTEE REPORTS

The reports of the following Committees setting out decisions taken pursuant to delegated powers were RECEIVED:

Audit Committee

Risk Management

Members noted that the Risk Management Strategy adopted by this Council in May 2022 identified that one objective of the Council was to embed risk management through the ownership and management of risk as part of all decision-making processes.

Members agreed that all new initiatives considered by this Council in any of its committees have a section included on risk management which would include the identification of key risks and any proposed mitigations for that risk.

Environment & Planning Committee

Cemetery Regulations

Members agreed the Cemetery Regulations be adopted.

Members noted that the Cemeteries Regulations were updated to reflect the change of burial authority from the Joint Burial Committee to Godalming Town Council. Information regarding the Children's Funeral Fund, exhumations, definitions of resident, non-resident and excepted categories, the Ahmadiyya Muslim Association, Exclusive Rights of Burial, Common Graves, Inspection of Memorials and Maintenance and Upkeep have been added or expanded to capture information in one document that was previously contained within the Minutes of the former Joint Burial Committee or within the Cemeteries Order 1977.

Policy & Management Committee

Members agreed the following documents be adopted.

- Complaints Procedure – How to Handle
- Complaints Procedure – How to Make
- Safeguarding Policy

Staffing Committee

Staffing Appeals Panel

Members noted that there are a number of Council policies and procedures that provide for the Staffing Committee to make decisions relating to an individual staff member or a staffing situation that could subsequently be subject to a right of appeal. In order to ensure that any exercising of such rights is managed in an expedient and fair manner, Members agreed to appoint 5 councillors, independent of the Staffing Committee, to form a pool of Members able to form an appeals panel, if required, to consider an appeal against a decision of the Staffing Committee in relation to flexible working, grievance, or disciplinary issues.

Members agreed the appointment of the following members to this function:

- Councillor Steel
- Councillor Crowe
- Councillor Crooks
- Councillor Taylor
- Councillor PMA Rivers

280. TO RECEIVE MINUTES OF COMMITTEE MEETINGS

The reports of the following committees setting out decisions taken pursuant to delegated powers were RECEIVED:

	Meetings Dated
Audit Committee	14 September 2023
Environment & Planning	20 July 2023 10 August 2023 31 August 2023
Policy & Management Committee	29 June 2023 7 September 2023
Staffing Committee	14 September 2023

281. COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY

Members received a verbal report from the Chair of the Environment & Planning Committee regarding a recommendation for the awarding of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding for the Broadwater Park Youth & Community Improvement project in support of providing for the increased delivery of youth activities both at the centre and within the wider area.

Members approved the recommendation to award £90,000 of Neighbourhood Community Infrastructure Levy funding for Phase One of the Broadwater Park Youth & Community Improvement Project.

282. BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

Members noted that Godalming Town Council, in partnership with Waverley Borough Council and the Chamber of Commerce, has provided funding and support for the creation of a Business Improvement District (BID) area within Godalming.

Work on the BID has been supported by MOSAIC, Waverley's nominated BID delivery consultants and a locally employed BID Project Manager.

Preparations have now reached a stage where the BID is ready to go to a ballot of the eligible businesses. If successful, the BID could deliver direct investment in support of the town business community of upwards of £815,435 over 5 years.

The BID would be funded by a 2% levy on the non-domestic rates of eligible businesses. For Godalming Town Council, excluding any temporary rate relief received; the levy amount would be approximately £263 per annum over the 5-year period.

The ballot will be conducted through an independent, confidential postal vote conducted by the Returning Officer at Waverley Borough Council, which is the responsible body as determined by the BID legislation.

Each eligible ratepayer will have one vote in respect of each hereditament within the BID area, provided they are listed on the National Non-Domestic Rates List for the defined area as provided by Waverley Borough Council.

Organisations occupying more than one hereditament will have more than one vote, therefore, Godalming Town Council will have two votes.

Ballot papers will be sent out to the appropriate organisations from 3 October 2023 to be returned no later than 31 October 2023.

For the BID to go ahead, two conditions must be met:

- more than 50% of businesses that vote must vote in favour; and
- of the businesses that vote, the 'yes' votes must represent more than 50% of the total rateable value of all votes cast.

The results of the ballot will be declared on 1 November 2023.

If successful the current stakeholder group would form the board of a Company Limited by Guarantee to manage the BID during its first year, thereafter the director of the board would be elected from the eligible BID organisations.

Members authorised the Town Clerk to cast 'yes' votes on behalf of the Town Council in the Godalming BID ballot.

283. ASSET DISPOSAL – PEUGEOT VAN

Members to note that as per the GTC's Asset Disposal Policy and Financial Regulations, the agreement of Full Council is required for the disposal of a GTC asset. Following the decision of the Policy & Management Committee to authorise the purchase of a replacement vehicle for GTC's existing Peugeot van (Min No 227-23 refers) Full Council is requested to resolve the disposal by sale of GTC's Peugeot van registration MT17 HAA for the best available price in consideration of its mechanical condition. Any sums received to be used to offset the cost of the replacement vehicle.

Members resolved to dispose by sale the Peugeot van registration MT17 HAA for the best available price in consideration of its mechanical condition.

284. PARISH ALLOWANCES

The Town Clerk received a letter from Waverley Borough Council Democratic Services informing GTC that Waverley Borough Council has appointed an Independent Remuneration Panel, jointly with Guildford, to undertake separate reviews of councillors' allowances for both Guildford and Waverley Borough Councils. They will commence the review of Guildford's allowances next month and Waverley's toward the end of the year.

The letter also states that:

The Panel has requested they be informed as to whether Godalming Town Council:

- (a) pays the chairman expenses under Section 15 of the Local Government Act 1972 referred to above;
- (b) would like to pay either your chairman, or all elected parish councillors, a parish basic allowance; and/or
- (c) would like to pay your parish councillors a parish travelling and subsistence allowance.

Whilst the Town Clerk was able to respond to point a above, points b and c are beyond delegated authority to do so and therefore required a resolution of the Council to inform the response.

Members considered a report from the Town Clerk (attached to the record minutes) relating to the Parish Basic Allowance and the Parish Travelling & Subsistence Allowance. Additionally, the reports also provide information on Carers' & Dependants' Allowance as it pertains to Town Councillors.

Members resolved that the Town Clerk should inform Waverley Borough Council that Godalming Town Council does not wish the Independent Remuneration Panel to consider making recommendations regarding the Parish Basic Allowance or the Parish Travelling & Subsistence Allowance for Godalming Town Council.

Members also resolved to authorise the Town Clerk to seek the opinion of NALC and SALC as to whether GTC has the powers to award a Dependent & Carers' Allowance. In the event that such powers exist, the Town Clerk is to produce a costed proposal for consideration by the Policy & Management Committee.

285. SUPPORT IN AID OF UKRAINE

At Full Council on 19 May 2022, Godalming Town Council resolved to provide reasonable support by way of council services and resources, along with the ability to provide grant funding of up to a total of £2,000 to community groups supporting Ukrainian refugees (Min No 24-22 refers).

To date, GTC has received no funding requests in support of this resolution, although it has provided support over the previous few months to assist Ukrainian families relocate from host families into independent accommodation. This support has been in the form of providing transport for moving larger items of furniture, such as beds and wardrobes that the families and hosts have not had the means to transport themselves.

The initial resolution of support was made with good intent at a time when the immediate needs of Ukrainian refugees were unknown, and the level of support required uncertain. Sixteen months on, the reality is that the uncertainty of the immediate impact of the Ukrainian refugee situation has stabilised and those families who located within the area during those early days of the conflict are now part of community.

Members considered whether the decision of 19 May 2022 to provide council resources and an allocation of funding to the Ukraine community and their hosts remains extant. It was agreed to continue the support for a further year on the same Terms of Reference and then bring the item back to this Committee.

286. EXTERNAL AUDIT

Members noted that Godalming Town Council has an unqualified audit for the financial year 2022/23 (copy attached to record minutes).

287. FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

Members noted that the Audit Committee made no recommendations for change to Financial Regulations at this time. Members further noted that the National Association of Local Councils is currently reviewing the model Financial Regulations and that this review may result in changes that this Council will need to consider at a future point in time.

288. SEALING OF DOCUMENTS, ETC.

The following resolution was passed nem con.

THAT THE TOWN CLERK BE AUTHORISED TO SIGN OR WHERE APPROPRIATE, TO HAVE SEALED ON BEHALF OF THE TOWN COUNCIL ANY ORDERS, DEEDS OR DOCUMENTS NECESSARY TO GIVE EFFECT TO ANY OF THE MATTERS CONTAINED IN THE REPORTS RECEIVED AT THIS MEETING OR IN ANY RESOLUTION PASSED BY THE TOWN COUNCIL.

289. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Full Council is scheduled to be held in the Council Chamber on Thursday, 14 December 2023 at 6.30pm.

290. ANNOUNCEMENTS

The following announcements were made:

- Farncombe Market – 23 September 2023 – 10am to 4pm
- Busbridge Junior School – Opening of MUGA – 26 September 2023
- Broadwater School – Opening of Canopy Project - 3 October 2023 – 5.30pm
- Closing of Boots pharmacy in Farncombe – 6 October 2023 – 4pm
- Mayor of Waverley's Concert – 6 October 2023 – 7pm
- Sign up for Poppy Collection – 11 October 2023
- Sign up for Fireworks Marshalling
- Mayoral Quiz – 27 October 2023 – 7pm at the Wilfrid Noyce Centre
- Remembrance Sunday – 12 November 2023