

PARISH OF GODALMING

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE TOWN COUNCIL

OF THE PARISH OF GODALMING HELD

ON THURSDAY, 9 MAY 2024

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

* Councillor Adam	* Councillor Holliday
* Councillor Clayton	* Councillor Kiehl
* Councillor Crooks	0 Councillor Martin
* Councillor Crowe	* Councillor PMA Rivers
* Councillor C Downey	* Councillor Steel
0 Councillor S Downey	* Councillor Thomson
* Councillor Follows	* Councillor Weightman
* Councillor Heagin	* Councillor Williams

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

632. MINUTES

The Minutes of the Extraordinary meeting of the Council held on 21 March 2024 were signed by the Mayor as a correct record.

633. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received and recorded as above.

634. DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS AND NON-PECUNIARY INTERESTS

Members made no declarations of interest in relation to any item on the agenda for this meeting, which is required to be disclosed by the Localism Act 2011 and the Godalming Members' Code of Conduct.

635. 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.

636. QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS

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

637. OFFICIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS, LETTERS, ETC

There were none.

638. COMMITTEE REPORTS

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

Audit Committee

The Audit Committee made several recommendations to Full Council regarding:

- the Internal Auditor's report at year end. This recommendation was as a separate agenda item (Min No 648-23 below refers);
- the Annual Governance Statement. This recommendation was as a separate agenda item (Min No 649-23 below refers); and
- the Accounting Statements for the year ended 31 March 2024. This recommendation was as a separate agenda item (Min No 650-23 below refers).

Treasury & Investment Strategy

The Audit Committee reviewed the Council's Treasury & Investment Strategy and affirmed the paramount importance of prioritizing the security of funds in all investment decisions. The Audit Committee further agreed that, among institutions meeting the requisite security standards, preference should be given to those demonstrating robust ethical and sustainable practices.

Full Council agreed the Audit Committee proposed amendment to Council's Treasury & Investment Strategy.

Environment & Planning Committee

Neighbourhood Community Infrastructure Levy

Full Council agreed the Environment & Planning Committee recommendation to approve the award of up to £33,000 of Neighbourhood CIL funding for the provision of bus shelters on Franklyn Road and Eashing Lane (Min No 550-23 refers).

Policy & Management Committee

Adoption of Policies

Full Council agreed the Policy & Management recommendation to approve the adoption of the following policies:

Grant Funding Policy & Procedure
Honorary Freeman & Freewoman Scheme

Members wished the Town Clerk to determine whether the Term Freeperson could be used. The relevant legislation states that a relevant authority may admit a person as an Honorary Freeman or an Honorary Freewoman, as such these are the terms that are to be used.

It was noted that the Town Clerk had erroneously indicated the ballot would be a simple majority, this is not the case, and the legislation requires an affirmative vote by not less than two-thirds of the members of the relevant authority, which for GTC is no less than 12 members, as such, the draft policy has been amended to incorporate this requirement.

639. 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	18 April 2024
Environment & Planning	22 February 2024 21 March 2024 25 April 2024
Policy & Management Committee	21 March 2024 25 April 2024
Staffing Committee	15 February 2024

640. MOTION ON NOTICE

Proposer: Cllr Crowe
Seconder: Cllr PMA Rivers

The Motion:

Despite recent mixed messages emanating from central government, Godalming Town Council wishes to agree with the [HM Treasury Equality, Inclusion & Belonging Statement](#) and assure staff and residents that “Diversity and inclusion is an integral part of the Council’s approach, both as an employer and a policy-maker.”

Godalming Town Council is proud to incorporate equality into its core objectives, making every effort to eliminate discrimination, create equal opportunities and develop good working relationships between different people.

Godalming Town Council recognises that everyone is different. The Council welcomes this diversity and wants to help every individual to meet their full potential.

The Council recognises that the task of promoting social inclusion, tackling discrimination, encouraging equal opportunities, and providing equality of opportunity in the provision of services and access to its facilities are of key importance for Godalming Town Council and the Council is committed to:

- eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation;
- advancing equality of opportunity; and
- fostering good relations between different groups.

Members agreed the motion and resolved to reaffirm the Council’s commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion, as set out in its Equality & Diversity Policy adopted on 18 May 2023 and to the duties imposed upon it by the [Equality Act 2010](#).

641. COMMUNITY OWNERSHIP FUND – REQUEST FOR EXTENSION OF FUNDING PERIOD

As a matter of financial prudence, Members resolved to agree to withhold from granting any further Neighbourhood CIL awards until completion of the Crown Court public toilets reconfiguration and refurbishment (due for completion end of September) and grant monies for this project from the Community Ownership Fund are received.

Members requested, that in order to provide a contingency buffer in relation to the duration of the funding period for the COF grant that the Town Clerk seeks an extension of time from the DLUHC for the project delivery (Min No 565-23 refers). The Town Clerk has been informed that if required it is possible, in exceptional circumstances to request for an

extension of up to 2-3 months. However, any such request would not be considered until Q3 of the funding period, which would be in June.

642. CROWN COURT PUBLIC TOILETS – RECONFIGURATION & REFURBISHMENT – TENDER REPORT & AWARD OF CONTRACT

Members resolved to make an award of contract for the reconfiguration and refurbishment of Crown Court public toilets.

The deadline for receipt of tenders for works to reconfiguration and refurbish of Crown Court public toilets was at 13.00 on 19 April 2024. The sealed tender documents were opened on 22/04/24, witnessed by the RFO and Cllr Heagin, where the names of the bidders and their tender price was recorded.

The received tenders were evaluated against the tender specification by the appointed surveyors who have provided an anonymised tender report for consideration by the Council for the award of the contract (attached to record minutes).

Financial regulations require any single item of expenditure in excess of £50,000 to be approved by Full Council.

Members considered the tender report and made an award of contract for works for the reconfiguration and refurbishment of the Crown Court public toilets to Contractor B at a contract price of £178,720.00, (subsequently identified to Members as Endwell Contracts).

Members noted that the schedule would seek to set up the work site on 30 May 2024, meaning the public toilets would be closed until completion in September, the Community & Communications Officer has gained agreement with seven High Street hospitality providers to provide 'no purchase required' access to their toilet facilities whilst the public toilets are being refurbished.

643. MAINTENANCE VEHICLES

Members resolved to agree to the purchase of a second-hand EV, Renault Kangoo Maxi or similar at a cost up to £8,000 from the maintenance equipment budget.

644. WORKPLACE (HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELFARE) REGULATIONS 1992

Members resolved to agree the recommendations contained within the new project/initiative assessment form – Provision of Welfare, Workshop and Ancillary Facilities at Eashing Cemetery Maintenance Depot.

Members considered the proposal contained within the New Projects/Initiatives Assessment Form – Provision of Welfare, Workshop and Ancillary Facilities at Eashing Cemetery Maintenance Depot (attached to record minutes).

645. PROVISION FOR HORTICULTURAL CULTIVATION BY GTC MAINTENANCE TEAM

Members resolved to agree the recommendations contained in the new project/initiative assessment form – Horticultural Cultivation Provision at Eashing Cemetery

Members considered the proposal contained within the New Projects/Initiatives Assessment Form – Horticultural Cultivation Provision at Eashing Cemetery (attached to record minutes).

646. OCKFORD PARK BUILDING TASK & FINISH GROUP

Members nominated Cllr Thomson and WBC Cllr Victoria Kiehl to be the representatives (alongside the Town Clerk) to work with WBC and other parties to seek to determine the details necessary for establishing a suitable community support Hub at the Ockford Park Hall.

647. HENRY SMITH CHARITIES' TRUSTEE

Members resolved to approve nominees as the Town's Trustees of the local Henry Smith Charities

The two charities, the Educational Foundation of Henry Smith Charity and the Henry Smith Charity, based in Godalming (not to be mistaken for the Henry Smith Charity based in London) are jointly operated under a common board of Trustees. These charities exist to make grants to the needy in the ancient parish of Godalming. The joint annual income generated from investments enables grants of approximately £4,000 per annum in support of children/young people and adults in need.

Historically, the Town Council nominates three Trustees to represent the town, (it should be noted that the Town Council nominees are not restricted to elected members and the 'term of office' of a Trustee is not linked to the election cycle). The Trustees meet formally twice a year, but the business of the charities is conducted by email and telephone between meetings.

The current Trustees nominated by the Town Council are Cllr Joan Heagin term expiry 16 July 2024, and Messrs Michael Stubbs and Steven Cosser, whose terms expire on 11 March 2025. Michael Stubbs was elected as the Chair of Trustees on 2 April 2024.

To provide a degree of certainty and stability for the Trust, Members agreed the above-named persons to continue for a second 4-year term as the Town's Trustees of the local Henry Smith charities.

648. REPORT OF THE INTERNAL AUDITOR

Members considered the report of an internal audit conducted on 15 April 2024 by the Council's Internal Auditor Mulberry & Co (the report is attached to record minutes) and noted the comments of the Audit Committee thereon.

Audit Point	Audit Findings	Council Response
End of year accounts	In my opinion the variance analysis requires a little more detail to explain the variances. This could be achieved by inserting more financial elements to wording element.	More detail has been added to the variance analysis.
Transparency	It was noted the web pages will need updating for the 2023/24 council year, namely pay-multiple, senior salaries and grants.	The RFO has now updated the transparency web page for 2023/24 for pay-multiple, senior salaries and grants.

649. ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT

Members considered the Annual Governance Statement and the answers to the questions posed by the Statement (both attached to record minutes).

650. ACCOUNTING STATEMENTS 2023/24

Members considered and agreed the Town Council's Accounting Statements for the Financial Year Ended 31 March 2024 (copy of Section 2 of the Annual Return is attached to record minutes).

651. 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.

652. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The date of the next Full Council meeting is the Annual Council/Mayor Making meeting scheduled to be held in the Council Chamber on Thursday, 16 May 2024 at 7.00pm.

653. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Church Street will be closed on Saturday, 11 May 2024 for a street party to celebrate The Star winning The Surrey & Hants Pub of the Year Award.

IN PURSUANCE OF THE PUBLIC BODIES (ADMISSION TO MEETINGS) ACT 1960 S.1(2), THE COMMITTEE RESOLVED TO EXCLUDE THE PUBLIC AND PRESS FROM THE MEETING AT THIS POINT PRIOR TO CONSIDERATION OF AGENDA ITEM(S) 23 BY REASON OF THE CONFIDENTIAL NATURE OF THE BUSINESS TO BE TRANSACTED I.E PERSONAL AND SENSITIVE. PERSONAL SENSITIVE INFORMATION

654. NOMINATION FOR HONORARY FREEDOM OF THE TOWN OF GODALMING

Members considered the nomination for the award of the Honorary Freedom of the Town of Godalming and with a vote in excess of a two third majority of the elected body the nomination was agreed. Members wished the Town Clerk to determine whether the nominee wished to accept the award.