



# GILLINGHAM TOWN COUNCIL

## GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

The Town Hall, School Road, Gillingham, Dorset SP8 4QR  
Tel: 01747 823588 Email: GTC@gillinghamdorset-tc.gov.uk

Minutes of a meeting of the **General Purposes Committee** held on **Monday 5<sup>th</sup> March 2018** in the **Jubilee Room, Town Hall, School Road, Gillingham** commencing at **7.30pm**.

**These minutes do not constitute a true record until ratified by Full Council.**

**Present:** Cllr B Von Clemens (Chairman),  
Cllr Mrs A Beckley, Cllr R Evill,  
Cllr M Hill and Cllr Mrs S Hunt.

**Non-voting  
Members:** None.

**Members of the  
public:** There was one member of the public present.

**Members of the  
Press:** There was no member of the press present.

**In Attendance:** Mrs C Ratcliffe, Deputy Clerk/Office Manager.

**Apologies:** Cllr Mrs S Cullingford, Cllr P Harris,  
Cllr S Joyce, Cllr Mrs B Ridout, Cllr Mrs D Toye  
and Cllr D Walsh.

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Prior to the meeting there had been a briefing at the GTC workshop by the Works Manager, Mr Simon Dobie, to inform members about the current situation with regards to existing machinery and the options that need to be considered when refurbishing existing machinery and replacing an old tractor. Four councillors and the Deputy Clerk attended the briefing.

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**271. To approve the minutes of the last meeting held on Monday, 5<sup>th</sup> February 2018.**

Cllr Evill proposed that **“the minutes of the meeting held on Monday, 5<sup>th</sup> February 2018, were approved as a correct record of the meeting”**. Cllr Mrs Beckley seconded and the vote was unanimous. The Chairman duly signed the minutes. **RESOLVED.**

**GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE – Monday, 5<sup>th</sup> March 2018 (continued):**

**272. Questions.** There were no questions.

**273. Declarations of Interest - Members are required to comply with the requirements of the Localism Act 2011, section 27 disclosable pecuniary interests.**

There were no declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests.

**274. To receive working party reports for consideration and approval, if available:**

**a) Allotments and Burials**

Cllr Evill, Lead Member, referred to an Allotments and Burials working party report that had been tabled at the meeting. Please refer to Appendix A. The report contained several recommendations.

Cllr Evill proposed that **“the recommendations contained in the Allotments and Burial working party report were taken en bloc”**. Cllr Mrs Beckley seconded and the vote was unanimous. **RESOLVED.**

Cllr Evill proposed that

**“A letter should be sent to the tenant of Park Farm Allotment Gardens answering his questions with regards to insurance, using the information provided by the Town Council’s insurance company.”**

**“A letter is sent to Richard Cummings at Orchard Park Garden Centre asking if a ‘No Dogs’ sign could be erected at the Orchard Park end of the allotment gardens, in the area close to the car wash.”**

**“GTC should level the hump near the access to the Cemetery Road Allotment Gardens and monitor the area on a regular basis. If necessary, the Works Manager should top dress problem areas as and when they occur.”**

**“The track leading to the Cemetery Road Allotment Gardens is not resurfaced.”**

**“Consideration is given to amending the Allotment Rules and Regulations in order to prevent vehicles (including GTC vehicles) using the track between 1<sup>st</sup> November and 31<sup>st</sup> March. This will be considered by the committee in June when the rules and regulations are reviewed and, if agreed, would take effect from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2019.”**

**“The document for the Procedure of Cemetery Memorial Testing is agreed and adopted”**.

Cllr Mrs Beckley seconded and the vote was unanimous. **RESOLVED.**

**b) Estate Management**

Cllr Von Clemens, Lead Member, reported that whilst no meeting has taken place this month he had attended an impromptu site meeting at POS Rolls Bridge and POS Jubilee Fields with the Works Manager, a member of the grounds team and the Deputy Clerk during February. The following work has been undertaken:

- Scrub removed near the river at Rolls Bridge and the pathway to Jubilee Fields. Snowdrops found flowering in the undergrowth.
- Barbed wire is being removed from all areas. A lot still remains in and along the river at Jubilee Fields. This is a hazard to all. One member of the grounds team was injured whilst removing barbed wire and required hospital treatment. The wire, hidden by scrub, flew up and cut his face when machinery was being used. Fortunately, protective clothing being worn at the time prevented a more serious injury.
- A culvert has been cleared and fenced off to prevent anyone falling in.
- The rotten wooden field gate at the entrance to Rolls Bridge from Foxglove Close has been replaced.

**GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE – Monday, 5<sup>th</sup> March 2018 (continued):**

**274. To receive working party reports for consideration and approval, if available:**

- The boundary hedge between the two areas of open space at the end of Yarlbury Wood Way would benefit from being laid in the ‘Dorset’ style similar to the work carried out last winter on the northern boundary hedge near Neal’s Yard. Costs will be investigated for work to be carried out next winter.
- The riverside path continues to erode and methods to prevent further erosion need to be investigated by Dorset Council’s Partnership/Gillingham Town Council in consultation with the Environment Agency.
- The play area at Marlott Road is in a very bad state. The equipment will not last much longer.
- The next Estate Management meeting is scheduled for Friday, 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2018 at 9am.

**c) Festive Lighting**

Cllr Mrs Ridout, Lead Member, was absent from the meeting and there was no report.

**d) Future Workshop Provision**

Cllr Von Clemens on behalf of Cllr Harris, Lead Member who was absent from the meeting, reported that all the Agreements regarding the use of the footings to the rear of the leisure centre building and the use of the leisure centre car park has been signed by all parties: Three Rivers, Gillingham Community and Leisure Trust Limited and Gillingham Town Council. The Town Council is now able to draw up a specification of works for tenders to be obtained.

**e) High Street Facilities**

Cllr Von Clemens on behalf of Cllr Mrs Toye, Lead Member, who was absent from the meeting, reported that the agreement between the district council to allow pedestrian access across the car park to use the refurbished building is being progressed (having been delayed for a while) and a revised agreement should be available soon. Once received, progress with this project will be resumed. A specification for the works will need to be agreed and building costs obtained.

**f) Town Seating and Planted Areas**

Cllr Mrs Ridout, Lead Member, was absent from the meeting and no report had been submitted; however, members who had attended the briefing in the workshop prior to the meeting had seen the recently delivered black metal seat to replace the old seat next to the entrance to the parish church and the new Town Council notice board to go near the newly restored flower beds in the High Street. A working party meeting will be convened shortly to decide on the exact position of the notice board.

**g) Traffic Management**

Cllr Mrs Ridout, Lead Member, was absent from the meeting; however, a report had been submitted and was tabled at the meeting. Please refer to Appendix B. The report contained no recommendations. There were no comments.

**275. To consider and approve quotations, following the workshop visit, to refurbish existing machinery and the purchase of a new tractor (£25k earmarked within FY 2018/19 Precept).**

The Chairman, Cllr Von Clemens, initially referred to the briefing that had taken place at the GTC workshop prior to the start of the meeting. The idea of a briefing was to give members an opportunity to see the equipment used by the grounds staff to maintain grassed verges, planted areas and open spaces.

**GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE – Monday, 5<sup>th</sup> March 2018 (continued):**

**275. To consider and approve quotations, following the workshop visit, to refurbish existing machinery and the purchase of a new tractor (continued):**

The Works Manager clearly explained and answered any questions regarding existing equipment and the proposal to replace an old tractor.

For those who were unable to attend the briefing, a report was tabled at the meeting outlining costs and recommendations. Please refer to Appendix C.

Members agreed with the purchase of equipment; however, Cllr Hill asked whether leasing costs had been considered against purchasing outright as this alternative method of financing may prove more cost effective.

Cllr Von Clemens replied that leasing costs had not been considered and suggested that the Works Manager was asked to make enquiries.

Cllr Von Clemens proposed that **“the purchase of the compact tractor and upgrading an existing piece of equipment was referred back to the next General Purposes Committee pending information on leasing costs”**. Cllr Evill seconded and the vote was unanimous. **RESOLVED.**

**276. To receive a request to use a small area at POS Barnaby Meadow for a birthday party.**

Cllr Von Clemens referred to a written request by a resident at Mulbury Court to use the public open space outside the front of their property, known as Barnaby Meadows, to hold a family birthday party for their daughter’s first birthday in July. The party would start from mid-morning and end by early evening. A gazebo may be used and recorded music played but consideration would be made to residents living nearby and all rubbish would be removed.

Cllr Von Clemens considered this to be a worthy request and members concurred.

Cllr Mrs Hunt proposed that **“the application to hold a small children’s birthday party on the POS Barnaby Meadow (front of Mulbury Court), should be agreed and a lettings agreement prepared”**. Cllr Hill seconded and the vote was unanimous. **RESOLVED.**

**277. To receive an update on the town Wi Fi project.**

Cllr Von Clemens updated members on the progress of the proposed WiFi project. The project has progressed as far as agreed by Policy and Resources Committee held on 18<sup>th</sup> September 2017, minute no. 286 (h) and ratified by Full Council 25<sup>th</sup> September 2017. An application has been prepared and will be submitted for European funding by Fusion WiFi when the grant becomes available. The project is very expensive and unlikely to go ahead if the application is unsuccessful. If, however, the grant application is successful the project will need to be revisited. As technology advances and 4G becomes more readily available, the Town WiFi project may prove obsolete.

**278. To receive Health and Safety matters for consideration and approval, if required.**

There were no Health and Safety matters for consideration this month.

**279. To receive a monthly report on the activities of Gillingham Direct.**

A report on the activities of Gillingham Direct was circulated prior to the meeting. Please refer to Appendix D. A member of the public asked that a vehicle at the top of Pound Lane that had been stationary for a few weeks was reported as ‘abandoned’.

**GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE – Monday, 5<sup>th</sup> March 2018 (continued):**

**280. Matters Pertinent.**

There were no matters pertinent.

The meeting closed at 8.20pm.

Minute no. 274 (a)

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**Gillingham Town Council**

**Allotments and Burials Working Party**

**Notes of the meeting held on  
Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> February 2018 at 7.30pm**

**Present:** Cllr Rupert Evill (Lead Member), Cllr Alan Frith, Cllr Mrs Donna Toye, Mr Geoff Bray (Gillingham Allotment Association), Mr Simon Dobie (Works Manager) (via Skype) and Mrs Julie Hawkins (Committee Clerk).

**Apologies:** Cllr Mrs Belinda Ridout and Cllr Mrs Su Hunt.

**1. To receive and consider correspondence from a tenant of Park Farm Allotment Gardens and make recommendations thereon.**

An email from the tenant was circulated prior to the meeting and members discussed the concerns raised as follows:

**a) Clarification over the need to provide the council with insurance details at the time of the tenancy renewal.**

Cllr Evill informed the meeting that the council's insurance company has provided the following response to GTC:

*"Your insurers confirm that as the Council have taken on responsibility for the second allotment site, then your insurance will include your Public Liability as property owners, and would respond as long as you are negligent.*

*However, the individuals who use the allotments are responsible for their own actions such as leaving tools out etc. If an incident were to occur and the tenant of the allotment were negligent then it would be a claim against them and not the town council and as such their own personal / contents insurance should cover their personal liability for such incidents but they would need to check their policy".*

It was agreed that a recommendation is made to the General Purposes Committee that a letter should be sent to the tenant explaining this.

**b) Concerns regarding dogs being walked from Orchard Park Car Park to the Allotment Gardens.**

The Works Manager informed the meeting that 'No Dogs' signs have been erected at the Park Farm Allotment Gardens.

It was agreed that a recommendation is made to the General Purposes Committee that Richard Cummings at Orchard Park Garden Centre should be contacted regarding the possibility of erecting additional signs at Orchard Park, in the area close to the car wash.

**c) Concerns that tenants are not complying with rule numbers 1, 4, 5 and 11.**

The Committee Clerk informed the meeting that at the end of the year a number of tenants decided not to renew their tenancy agreement and new tenants have now taken over. It was agreed that the situation should be monitored.

**2. To receive and consider a letter from the Gillingham Allotment Association and make recommendations thereon. *Copy attached.***

**a) Concerns over the boundary wall being an eyesore and a trip hazard.**

Cllr Frith informed the meeting that on receipt of the letter he had visited the site with the Works Manager and Mrs Hawkins. Cllr Frith explained that an inspection of the area had been made and no trip hazards had been identified. Regular visual checks of the area will continue.

The Committee Clerk informed the meeting that subject to the weather, contactors will start work on the wall at the end of March.

**b) Area around the pedestrian gate.**

Mr Bray explained that the area around the pedestrian gate gets slippery during wet weather and the Allotment Association has recommended that slabs with a secure surface finish be laid in the area. Mr Bray explained that the situation is exacerbated by a hump in the ground.

Following a discussion it was agreed that a recommendation is made to the General Purposes Committee that slabs should **not** be laid in this area, GTC should level the hump and monitor the area on a regular basis. If necessary the Works Manager will top dress problem areas as and when they occur.

**c) Request to resurfacing of the track.**

Mr Bray informed the meeting that the Allotment Association wish to remind the council that the main wheeled users of the lane are GTC vehicles accessing the polytunnels and (in summer) filling bowsers. The Allotment Association would like the lane completely resurfaced, from the hedge to the wall, with some suitable, and suitably compacted, hardcore.

The following comments were made during the discussion:

- It should be noted that GTC vehicles do not use the track during the winter, however there is evidence of vehicles (thought to be owned by allotment holders) using the track.
- The area is classed as a track and is not a lane.
- The track has been used by allotment holders for over sixty years with very few complaints being reported to the council.
- The track, which runs parallel to the Garden of Remembrance contributes to the historic character of the area and it is hoped that in the future the area will be included within the conservation area.
- The destruction of the native flowers and grass along the track would be contrary to the council's pollinator pledge.

- The cost of resurfacing the area cannot be justified and should not be passed on to the council tax payer.
- A hard surface will result in water running down the slope and into the allotment gardens resulting in possible drainage problems.

It was agreed that a recommendation is made to the General Purposes Committee that the track leading to the Cemetery Road Allotment Gardens is not resurfaced.

It was agreed that a recommendation is made to the General Purposes Committee that consideration is given to amending the rules in order to prevent vehicles (including GTC vehicles) using the track between 1<sup>st</sup> November and 31<sup>st</sup> March. This would be considered by the committee in June when the rules and regulations are reviewed and if agreed, would take effect from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2019.

**d) To receive an update of the installation of the tap.**

The Works Manager informed the meeting that the installation of the tap has been included in the work schedule for the Spring and will be operational in time for the growing season.

**3. To receive a Cemetery Memorial Defect Report dated January 2018.**

The committee thanked the Works Manager for the report.

**4. To agree a procedure for memorial testing at Gillingham Cemetery.**

The Chairman referred to Minute No. 267 of the General Purposes Meeting held on Monday 5<sup>th</sup> February 2018 which states:

*Cllr Harris proposed that "the Topple Testing Report is referred to the Allotments and Burials Working Party to agree procedures for notifying next of kin about a defective memorial". Cllr Mrs Beckley seconded and the vote was unanimous. **RESOLVED***

Cllr Frith referred to the guidance issued by the Ministry of Justice which states: *'Where a memorial has been deemed at immediate risk and work needs to be undertaken clear information should be posted in the burial grounds. Notice should be placed on or near to these memorials, giving contact details and the period within which contact can be made. Where the grave owner is known, it is good practice to notify them to give them the opportunity to repair the memorial'.*

The Working Party worked on the wording of a procedure document and it was agreed that a recommendation is made to the General Purposes Committee that the document at **Appendix A** is adopted.

**5 Recommendations.**

- **A letter should be sent to the tenant of Park Farm Allotment Gardens answering his questions with regards to insurance, using the information provided by the council's insurance company.**
- **A letter is sent to Richard Cummings at Orchard Park Garden Centre asking if a 'No Dogs' sign could be erected at the Orchard Park end of the allotment gardens, in the area close to the car wash.**

- **GTC should level the hump near the access to the Cemetery Road Allotment Gardens and monitor the area on a regular basis. If necessary the Works Manager should top dress problem areas as and when they occur.**
- **The track leading to the Cemetery Road Allotment Gardens is not resurfaced.**
- **Consideration is given to amending the Allotment Rules and Regulations in order to prevent vehicles (including GTC vehicles) using the track between 1<sup>st</sup> November and 31<sup>st</sup> March. This will be considered by the committee in June when the rules and regulations are reviewed and if agreed would take effect from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2019.**
- **The document for the Procedure of Cemetery Memorial Testing shown at Appendix A is adopted.**

**Gillingham Town Council**

**Traffic Management Report to General Purposes Committee**

**Author: Cllr Belinda Ridout**

**There was no working party meeting but can report on the following:**

1. **Bay Road** – a Speed Survey has been conducted (w/c 19<sup>th</sup> February) and await results.
2. **Hardings Lane** – unfortunately the meeting scheduled for 1<sup>st</sup> March had to be postponed due to inclement weather. To reconvene as soon as possible.
3. **Highway top dressing concerns** - a reply has been received from Steve Higgs, Site Agent, Highways Construction Team, in reply to concerns re the quality of top dressing and weeds left in the verges (see attached). It would appear that the 'weed ripper' is not as efficient as they state however, it is noted that action is being taken with regard to excessive loose chippings and remedial dressing at the junction of Cold Harbour with Wyke Road.
4. **Skittles Workshop, Station Road** – parking issues have been addressed outside these premises with a single yellow line from Joubere to the junction with Station Road. A 'thank you' letter has been received from the owner of the premises.
5. **Speed Watch Group** - an inquiry was made last week from a very keen member of the public to resurrect the Speed Watch Group. Details have been sent to the PCSO's to take up with the person direct.

**Gillingham Town Council**

**Purchase of Compact Tractor**

**Author: Mr Simon Dobie, Works Manager**

**1. Background Information**

The current John Deere Tractor was purchased in 1998 and was originally used for grass cutting. As it got older, newer more efficient grass cutting machinery was purchased and the tractor was fitted with a front loader and backhoe (est. cost £15,000). The tractor is now 20 years old and replacement parts are hard, if not impossible, to source. The tractor needs to be replaced while it is still in working order and has a reasonable second-hand value. The front loader and backhoe can be fitted to an existing tractor.

Members were invited to attend a briefing at the workshop prior to the General Purposes Committee on Monday, 5<sup>th</sup> March at 6.30pm to learn about the technicalities that need to be considered regarding the purchase of a new compact mower.

**2. Possible Solution**

To supply parts and labour costs to fit the loader and backhoe to the new piece of equipment is £5,985 plus VAT.

To purchase a new compact tractor – Kubota 2311 (pictured below): £17,995 ex VAT (note RRP £24,195).

The old tractor can be part exchanged for £2,500 towards the new vehicle.



### 3. Cost Implications

A quotation has been sourced from a reputable supplier who has supplied the Town Council with similar pieces of equipment. It would be very difficult to obtain an identical quotation and to seek a competitive overall price.

The cost of replacing the old tractor and to attach existing equipment is as follows:

Purchase of new compact tractor	£17,995
Less Part-exchange	£ <u>2,500</u>
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>£15,495</b>
Parts and labour costs to attach to existing equipment	£ <u>5,985</u>
<b>Total Cost</b>	<b>£21,480</b>

A budget for replacement machinery of £25,000 has been earmarked within in the Precept FY 2018/19. Budge no. 6.04

The remaining £3,520 within budget no.604 will be used to purchased smaller additional pieces equipment that may need to be purchased during the coming financial year.

### 4. Recommendations

That the following recommendations are made to the Policy and Resources Committee:

**That a Kubota 2311 is purchased at a cost of £17,995 ex VAT and financed from Precept FY 2018/19, precept budget no. 6.04.**

**That £5,985 is set aside for parts and labour costs to allow the front loader and back hoe to be fixed to an existing tractor and financed from Precept FY 2018/19, precept budget no. 6.04.**

**That the current John Deere tractor is part exchanged with the purchase of the new compact tractor for an agreed price of £2,500.**

Minute no. 279

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**Gillingham Town Council**
**Report from Gillingham Direct 31<sup>st</sup> January -28<sup>th</sup> February 2018**

The following matters have been dealt with by Gillingham Direct:

No.	Issue	Reference No.
1	Road surface breaking up and sinking around the utility cover on Newbury Bridge	DCC 1093456 This has been passed on to Wessex Water
2	The grass verge on the corner of Melchester Road has been churned up by the bin lorry	DWP notified.
3	Hedge growing over the pavement from Lodbourne Green Farmhouse	DCC 1093863
4	The new road surface at Coldharbour and Wyke has worn away.	DCC
5	Pothole outside the entrance to Windyridge Farm, Bay Road. Previous repair washed away.	FS67748673
6	White lines faded at the junction of Kingfisher Avenue and Shaftesbury Road	DCC 1094124
7	Pothole on the junction of Shaftesbury Road and King John Road	DCC 1094122
8	Bus stop white road markings faded outside Waitrose	DCC 1094194
9	Request for more 'caution horses' signs at Ecliffe	DCC 1094443
10	Pothole at the entrance to Chantry Farm at Wyke Street. Previous repair washed away	DCC 1094525
11	A tree from the footpath N64/67 is overhanging Wyke Barn and blocking the light	MNT 39948
12	A resident in Victoria Road would like the trees trimmed in Hardings Park as they are blocking the light into their gardens	GTC to investigate
13	Fly tipping near the ford at Colesbrook	DWP
14	Rubbish left in the Shires Gate field	GTC to remove
15	Household waste is overflowing from a property at Horsefields into the field	GTC to investigate
16	Fly tipping along Rams Hill, Manston	D4U/DWP
17	Dog mess on the footpath between the station and Newbury	South Western Rail notified
18	A resident at 55 Marlott Road would like the large shrub outside her property cut back.	GTC
19	Request received for an apple tree at the bottom of Deane Avenue to be pruned	DCC James Bennett notified
20	2 bollards missing in Queen Street near the Old School Rooms	DCC 1095137
21	Pothole near Slaughtergate Farm in Milton Lane	DCC 1095137
22	Pothole outside 29 Barnaby Mead	DCC 1095232
23	Report of trip hazard at Cemetery Road Allotments	GTC to investigate
24	Fly tipping on land at Saxongate	GTC to investigate

35 Replacement recycle bins have been collected.

2 Weddings have taken place