



GILLINGHAM TOWN COUNCIL

The Town Hall, School Road, Gillingham, Dorset SP8 4QR

GROUP MEETING of the GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Notes of meeting held under a Temporary Scheme of Delegation on 2nd August 2021 at 7.30pm

The legislation introduced by the Government to allow for online meetings during the pandemic ceased on 6th May 2021; therefore, the facility to meet and make decisions using virtual meeting arrangements is no longer lawful.

In accordance with Section 101 of the Local Government Act 1972, a temporary scheme of delegation to the Proper Officer was approved by Full Council on 26th April 2021 (Minute No. 472).

This group meeting was held in the interest of openness, transparency, and democracy to enable the Proper Officer to make informed decisions pertaining to matters dealt with by the General Purposes Committee.

Press and public were invited to join the meeting.

Gillingham Town Council's Temporary Scheme of Delegation is available to view [HERE](#)

Present:

Cllr Mike Hill, Chair
Cllr Graham Poulter, Deputy Chair
Cllr Alison von Clemens
Cllr Barry von Clemens
Cllr Fiona Cullen
Cllr Rupert Evill

Cllr Dennis Griffin (joined the meeting late)
Cllr Paul Harris
Cllr John Robinson
Cllr Donna Toye
Cllr Keith Wareham
Cllr Roger Weeks

In attendance:

Town Clerk, Julie Hawkins
Deputy Town Clerk: Clare Ratcliffe

Press and Public:

Michael Streeter, Gillingham and Shaftesbury News

9. **Public Participation. Please note: a period up to a maximum of fifteen minutes will be allowed for public comments and questions restricted to items listed on the following agenda.**

There was no public participation.

10. **To receive and accept apologies for absence.**

There were no apologies for absence.

11. **To receive any questions pertaining to the previous minutes.**

There were no questions.

12. **To receive declarations of interest. Please note; members are required to comply with the requirements of the Localism Act 2011, section 27 disclosable pecuniary interests.**

There were no declarations of interest received.

13. **To receive and consider reports from sub-committees and task and finish groups, as follows:**

a) Allotments and Burials Sub-committee

Cllr Evill, Lead Member, verbally reported that a site meeting had taken place and that breaches of the cemetery regulations had been reported to the Town Clerk for action.

b) Annual Christmas Event and Festive Lighting Sub-committee

Cllr B von Clemens, Lead Member, referred to a report that had been circulated prior to the meeting. Please refer to **Appendix A below**. The report contained two recommendations.

It was agreed that the following recommendations should be submitted to the Proper Officer:

Gillingham Town Council **RECOMMENDS** that the 2021 festive lights event is to be held on Friday 3rd December.

Gillingham Town Council **RECOMMENDS** that the event will be held solely on the Town Meadow.

c) Estate Management Sub-committee

Cllr B von Clemens, Lead Member, referred to a report that had been circulated prior to the meeting. Please refer to **Appendix B below**. The report contained one recommendation.

Cllr B von Clemens thanked the grounds team for all their hard work with a themed flower bed in the High Street celebrating the work of Dorset libraries and particularly Gillingham Library, see photograph below.



It was agreed that the following recommendations should be submitted to the Proper Officer:

Gillingham Town Council **RECOMMENDS** that Aster Homes are advised that the revised play area design for the new play area to be sited on the extension of the public open space at Barnaby Meadows is acceptable

d) Gillingham Gateways Task and Finish Group

A report had been circulated prior to the meeting. Please refer to **Appendix C below**. There were no recommendations. There were no comments

e) Health and Safety Sub-committee

Cllr John Robinson, Lead Member, referred to a report that had been circulated prior to the meeting. Please refer to **Appendix D below**. There were no recommendations.

Cllr Robinson reported that a strategic health and safety audit had been carried out at the workshops and town hall earlier in the day on 2nd August and actions resulting from this meeting will be included in the next health and safety sub-committee report.

Cllr Robinson highlighted the concerns regarding the mental wellbeing of staff asked that this was referred to the Human Resource Committee.

f) Woodwater Farm Sports Facility Task and Finish Group

There was no report this month.

g) Workshop Task and Finish Group

Cllr Harris, Lead Member, referred to a report that had been circulated prior to the meeting. Please refer to **Appendix E below**. There were no recommendations. There were no comments.

h) Properties Sub-committee

The inaugural meeting of the Properties Sub-committee had taken place earlier in the afternoon on 2nd August 2021. Please refer to **Appendix F below**. The report contained three recommendations.

It was agreed that the following recommendations should be submitted to the Proper Officer:

- Gillingham Town Council **RECOMMENDS** that Financial Regulations, para 11(h) are suspended to allow emergency repairs to be carried out at the High Street Public Convenience at a cost of £1,305.88.
- Gillingham Town Council **RECOMMENDS** that a request is made to the Finance and Policy Committee for a virement of £800 from Cost Centre 13, Budget no. 7111, Chantry Community Office to Cost Centre 14, Budget no. 7134, Public Conveniences, to allow the repairs to be carried out.
- Gillingham Town Council **RECOMMENDS** that repairs are carried out to the High Street Public Convenience at a cost of £1,305.88 to be funded from Cost Centre 14, Budget no. 7134.

14. To receive a monthly report on enquiries received by Gillingham Town Council.

A report was circulated prior to the meeting. Please refer to **Appendix G below**. There were no comments.

15. To receive matters pertinent to this meeting.

a) South Western Railway – Timetable Consultation

It is proposed to reduce the number of trains that stop at Gillingham during off peak hours. Page 35 of this documents refers to services that stop at Gillingham Station. Responses to the consultation are required by 19th September 2021. A copy of this document is available on request from the Deputy Town Clerk.

The meeting closed at 8.04pm

General Purposes Committee (SoD) – 2nd August 2021

Reference no. 5(b)

Gillingham Town Council

Festive Lights Sub-committee

Meeting held on 20th July 2021

Author: Cllr Barry von Clemens

Present: Cllr Barry von Clemens
Cllr Sharon Cullingford
Cllr Paul Harris
Mayor's Secretary, Jill Ezzard
Works Manager, Simon Dobie

Apologies: Cllr Alison von Clemens
Cllr Mick Hill

- It was agreed that Cllr Barry von Clemens will be Lead Member.
- The date of the festive lights event will be Friday 3rd December 2021, to start at 18:30 subject to council approval.
- The theme for this year's event will be 'Carols around the Christmas tree'.
- It was agreed that for this year due to the continued uncertainty of the COVID pandemic there should be no parade along the High Street.
- The event itself will be held on the Town Meadow only.
- The members agreed on an outline for the event which will consist of a choir and the Gillingham Imperial Silver band to play carols next to the town Christmas tree (band and choir to be contacted). Further details of the event on the meadow will be discussed at future meetings.
- The Mayor, accompanied by Father Christmas, will walk from the Red Lion (to be confirmed) to the Christmas tree where the Mayor will say a few words, the vicar will then say a few words followed by Father Christmas and the Mayor turning on the lights.
- The GMS Lions will provide their Santa float and a Father Christmas for the event and will manage the young people's visit to Santa.
- The sound system for the event is to be investigated by Jill Ezzard and will report back to the next meeting.
- The Chamber of Commerce is to be approached to enquire if they will sponsor the Christmas trees that go above the shops on the High Street.
- Staging for the event will also be investigate and a report presented to the next meeting.

Recommendations

- **That the 2021 festive lights event is to be held on Friday 3rd December 2021.**
- **That the event will be held solely on the Town Meadow.**

Gillingham Town Council

Estate Management Sub-committee

Site Meeting to held on Thursday, 15th July at 10.30am

A meeting was held on site at the public open space at Ham Farm.

Present: Cllr Barry von Clemens, Lead Member
Cllr Fiona Cullen
Cllr Mike Gould
Cllr Paul Harris
Cllr John Kilcourse
Cllr Graham Poulter
Cllr John Robinson
Cllr Keith Wareham
Simon Dobie, Works Manager
Martin Down, Deputy Works Manager
Clare Ratcliffe, Deputy Town Clerk
Bob Messer, GANG

1. Fencing between St Mary's School and the public open space (Graham Poulter)

Cllr Poulter summarised the situation, having attended a site meeting with the school and the works manager and looking at all legal documents currently available. It is not clear who is responsible for the fencing. Further investigations will be made. Meanwhile, a quotation for the repair is being obtained by both the town council and St Mary the Virgin Primary School. More information available at the next meeting.

2. Works Manager's Report

There was no report this month.

3. Play Area Report

a) To agree suggested play area equipment for Barnaby Meadows (Aster Homes)

A revised play area design for the extension of the public open space at Barnaby Meadows from Aster Homes had been circulated prior to the meeting. There have been problems obtaining a design for a sloped play area.

b) Repairs, maintenance issues (if any)

The working party visited Chaffinch Chase LAP and Deer Gardens LAP on the Ham Farm Estate.

It was suggested that the Chaffinch Chase LAP is decommissioned, and the area maintained as garden with seating, litter bin and appropriate shrubs and bulbs. Costings to be obtained.

It was suggested that the requirement for play area fencing was investigated at Deer Gardens LAP. Currently there is a mixture of wooden and metal fencing.

4. Gillingham Action for Nature (Bob Messer)

GANG have 77 no. trees in their nursery. Alder trees are ready to be planted in hedgerows etc.

A lot of maintenance has been done to the path at Withy Woods. Tree surgery work that is required at Withy Woods is likely to cost £2,000.

Fundraising: A Big Quiz has been arranged, which should hopefully raise £1,000. The Ladies Probus has recently disbanded and residual funds donated to GANG. There has been an anonymous donation.

5. Herbetum Trail – update

The Deputy Clerk reported that all 6 micro herbetums are now in place. An interpretation board about the project to be sited up at the railway station is in progress. Research on the use of herbs for medicinal and culinary uses linking modern day to mediaeval times is in hand.

6. Interpretation Panels – update

The Deputy Town Clerk is currently working with the Project Officer for the Gillingham Royal Forest Project to provide interpretation panels for the public open spaces that fall within the boundaries of the Royal Forest. The panels will be jointly financed by the project and the town council.

7. Any other business

Cllr Wareham informed the sub-committee that the café owner of the Filling Station café would have no objection to a tree being planted on the grassed area adjacent to the café.

8. Date of Next Meeting

Thursday, 19th August 2021. Venue; TBD.

9. Recommendation

- **That Gillingham Town Council informs Aster Homes that the revised play area design for the new play area to be sited on the extension of the public open space at Barnaby Meadows is acceptable.**

General Purposes Committee (SoD) – 2nd August 2021

Reference no. 5(d)

Gillingham Town Council

Gillingham Gateways Task and Finish Group

Site Meeting held at Gillingham Railway Station and Relief Road

on Thursday, 8th July 2021

Present: Cllr Mike Gould, Lead Member
Cllr Barry von Clemens
Cllr Graham Poulter
Cllr Keith Wareham
Dorset Council Councillor Belinda Ridout
Deputy Town Clerk, Clare Ratcliffe

Apologies: Cllr Paul Harris

1. Butterfly and Bee Garden



Site of proposed Butterfly and Bee Garden

Dorset Council Councillor, Belinda Ridout, summarised the project's history to-date and the current situation with regards to a lease that would be required by Network Rail to allow a third party to landscape an area adjoining platform 2 at the railway station (see photo above). The Friends of Gillingham Station (volunteer group) are not able to enter into any lease. If the garden is to go ahead, a lease will need to be made between Network Rail and Gillingham Town Council. It was suggested to investigate the contents of a draft lease before any decision was made about a possible way forward. Cllr Ridout will liaise with Network Rail to obtain a draft lease.

2. Le Neubourg Way



It is agreed that the area in front/side of The Factory Shop and on the opposite side of the road – Mole Valley, Howdens – would benefit from landscaping. DC Highways are aware that many were disappointed that the landscaping intended to go alongside the new road layout was not achieved in FY 2020/21. It was suggested that to progress this project using Gillingham Town Council's

funds set aside for Gateway Projects, that a site meeting with DC Highways/DC Landscaping is arranged to decide what type of landscaping is achievable in this area (allowing for electric cables, pedestrians, highways visibility, cost etc). Would it be possible to plant an avenue of Acers, like those planted at the entrance to Oak Woods, off Lower Station Rd?

Note: The proposed area for planting belongs to DC Highways.



3. Newbury Planted Area



The planted area at Newbury, whilst looking lovely, does require a bit more structure. The photo opposite was taken before the recent road improvements; many of the trees and shrubs have been removed since then. The brickwork needs to be repointed in places and the paving slabs have become uneven.

To enhance the area further a decorative metal archway could be installed at the entrance to the seating area (like the photograph below), with 'Gillingham' and the town's crest along the top. Climbing roses could be grown up the pillars.

It was suggested that various archway designs are investigated to enable the work to be costed. **Note:** Newbury Gardens have been maintained by Gillingham Town Council for several years under licence from Dorset Council.

4. Queen's Platinum Jubilee

As part of the Platinum Jubilee celebrations, it is anticipated that there will be funding available for community projects to commemorate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee. The proposed avenue of trees near the traffic lights at Station Road, a revised planting scheme for Newbury Gardens complete with decorative archway could be put forward as a commemorative project. Monies held within the Gateway Project could be used as match funding.



General Purposes Committee (SoD) - 2nd August 2021

Reference no. 5(e)

Gillingham Town Council

Health and Safety Sub-committee

Meeting held on 14th July 2021

Author: Cllr John Robinson

Present: Cllr John Robinson, Lead Member
Cllr Alan Frith
Cllr Roger Weeks
Town Clerk, Julie Hawkins
Deputy Town Clerk, Clare Ratcliffe
Works Manager, Simon Dobie

1. Introduction

Councillor Robinson welcomed all to the Health and Safety meeting including for the first time, Cllr Roger Weeks who has joined the team. The aim of the meeting was to review Health and Safety issues for the Town Council since the last meeting.

2. Review of Actions

- i) The electrical installation at the Old Mortuary building in the Garden of Remembrance was assessed as 'Unsatisfactory' at the last inspection with several observations required to be actioned. This has now been completed.
- ii) A computerised (spreadsheet) training record has progressed, though some changes are still required to ensure compatibility across the Office and Works team formats.

Action: Town Clerk/Office Manager

- iii) Fire training for all Council staff is to be completed and will be added to the training records.

Action: Office Manager

- iv) The Works team were due to go to occupational health in April 2020 for jobs, vibration assessments etc, but this was cancelled due to the current lock-down restrictions. An alternative supplier (Brunel) has been found, their quote approved, and these assessments have started and are ongoing at the Council Offices.

3. Reported Incidents

- The incident at Riversmeet is yet to be resolved and discussions continue. The Town Clerk has been in contact with Steve Savage, Dorset Council Transport Liaison Manager, and stated that the Highways Authority would not support a swap of the entry and exit to the car park and alternatives such as 'rumble strips' or 'dragons teeth' were suggested at the current exit to the car park along with appropriate signage. However, to move forward on this the Contracts and Agreements committee have been asked to establish who owns these areas.
- The member of the Works team that has been absent from work following an injury is now back at work and on light duties.

4. Health and Safety Issues

No new health and safety issues were reported.

5. General

A general discussion on health and safety highlighted several areas of concern which must be addressed. They include areas such as an overall policy for health and safety where the policy is to provide a clear overarching statement setting out how the organisation approaches safety in general and who is responsible for particular safety issues or areas. The overall policy will link to further policies, operating procedures, guidelines or handbooks which explain in more detail how staff must act in certain circumstances. Many of the lower level policies, procedures are in place, but it was felt that the overarching policy was missing.

Other areas of concern included the mental wellbeing of staff. A significant problem of staff resourcing was highlighted. A direct impact of this and a talk by Dorset Mind clearly demonstrated that several members of staff and councillors are suffering from 'burn out'.

Health and Safety is not something that is done and then forgotten about – it is an ongoing practice which will evolve as a business moves forward. To this end, it was considered prudent to conduct an internal audit both at the Workshop and at the Council offices. These will be carried out on the 2nd August 2021 and should put us in a more robust situation when Ellis Whittam carry out their annual inspection on the 10th August 2021.

5. Any Other Business

None other business was identified

6. Date of Next Meeting

The date of the next meeting was agreed for 25th August 2021 at 9.15am.

7. Recommendations

None

Gillingham Town Council**Workshop Task and Finish Group – Update Report****Lead: Councillor Paul Harris****1. Current Progress**

The task and finish group held an MS Teams meeting on 22nd July 2021. Progress to date:

- New Workshop
 - External painting around the inner courtyard is complete. Painting the remainder of the external walls will continue after the formal opening on 23rd July 2021.
- Old Workshop.
 - Plans are in place for the Units to be handed back to the landlord on 23 July 2021.

2. Future Work

- We await planning permission to start the fence and gate installation.
- The next meeting will take place in early September.

3. Formal Opening

The formal opening ceremony took place on the evening of 23 July 2021. A small group guided tour of the new workshop and its facilities was available to all attendees.

4. Recommendations

There are no recommendations this month.

Gillingham Town Council

Properties Sub-committee

Author: Julie Hawkins, Town Clerk

Notes of a meeting held via MS Teams on Monday, 2nd August at 14.30

Present: Cllr Paul Harris
Cllr John Kilcourse
Cllr John Robinson
Julie Hawkins, Town Clerk
Simon Dobie, Works Manager

10. To Elect a Lead Member

It was agreed that Cllr John Kilcourse should be lead member of the Properties Sub-committee.

11. Apologies

Apologies from Cllr Sharon Cullingford were received and accepted.

12. Council Property

a) High Street Bus Shelter

The Town Clerk informed the meeting that the bus shelter had been fully refurbished in 2016. It was agreed that Cllr Kilcourse and the Works Manager should work on a maintenance plan which would be fed into the 5 year action plan.

b) Shaftesbury Road Bus Shelter

The Shaftesbury Road Bus Shelter was installed in 2019. It was agreed that Cllr Kilcourse and the Works Manager should work on a maintenance plan which would be fed into the 5 year action plan.

c) Cemetery Chapel

The Works Manager informed the meeting that the Chapel roof was repaired in 2012/2013. The building is currently being used to store the Christmas lights; however, these will shortly be moved to Roman Court which will enable funeral directors and members of the public to use the Chapel for services.

It was agreed that Cllr Kilcourse and the Works Manager should investigate the future use of the building and work on a maintenance plan which would be fed into the 5 year action plan.

d) Cemetery Shed

It was agreed that the sub-committee should consider setting up a water station in this area of the cemetery and that Cllr Kilcourse and the Works Manager should work on a maintenance plan which will be fed into the 5 year action plan.

e) Old Mortuary Building

The future use of the Old Mortuary Building was discussed. The Works Manager asked for the original part of the building to be retained for use by the town council gardeners. It was agreed that the sub-committee should consider the future use, and that Cllr Kilcourse and the Works Manager should work on a maintenance plan which will be fed into the 5 year action plan.

f) Public Convenience / Town Bridge Office

The public convenience is still closed following an incident on Saturday 3rd July. A quotation has been received from the building company who carried out the refurbishment work in 2020, following a full tendering process. To replace the existing steel door to the public toilet will cost £1,305.88 plus VAT. Temporary toilets are currently being hired at £40 per week plus VAT. The sub-committee agreed that the matter is urgent and therefore a recommendation should be made to the General Purposes Committee requesting that Financial Regulation Para 11(h) should be suspended to allow emergency repairs to be carried out.

As there is insufficient money in the budget, it will be necessary for the General Purposes Committee to make a request to the Finance and Policy Committee for a virement of £800. The RFO recommends that the virement is taken from Cost Centre 13, Budget no. 7111, Chantry Community Office. An insurance claim form will be submitted, however there will be an excess of £250.

g) Town Hall

The Town Clerk informed the meeting of various items that will shortly need attention, including a blown window, damaged fascia boards and a broken door. Replacement of the fire alarm and upgrading of lighting was also discussed. It was agreed that Cllr Kilcourse and the Works Manager should work on a maintenance plan which will be fed into the 5 year action plan.

h) Roman Court Workshops

Various matters were discussed including the future replacement of the roof and the addition of photovoltaic panels. Cllr Robinson informed the meeting that the Health and Safety Sub-committee had held a meeting earlier in the day where it was recommended that an asbestos management plan and fire risk assessment should be completed as soon as possible.

It was agreed that Cllr Kilcourse and the Works Manager should work on a maintenance plan which will be fed into the 5 year action plan.

i) Store at King John Road

The Works Manager informed the meeting that access to the building is difficult due to parked cars blocking the entrance. It was agreed that ownership of the area adjacent to the building should be established and the future use of the building should be investigated. Cllr Kilcourse and the Works Manager will work on a maintenance plan which will be fed into the 5 year action plan.

j) Gillingham War Memorial

It was agreed that a separate meeting to discuss the War Memorial is needed.

k) Milton-on-Stour War Memorial

It was agreed that the grounds team should be instructed to clean the face of the war memorial; however, it was stressed that no chemicals should be used. Ways in which to improve the area surrounding the war memorial were discussed and it was agreed that Milton-on-Stour residents should be consulted before anything is decided. Cllr Kilcourse and the Works Manager will visit the site and make any recommendations to the next meeting of the sub-committee.

13. Date of Next Meeting

Thursday 12th August 2021, at 9.30am via MS Teams.

14. Recommendation

- **That Gillingham Town Council suspends Finance Regulations, Para 11(h) to allow emergency repairs to be carried out at the High Street Public Convenience at a cost of £1,305.88.**
- **That a request is made to the Finance and Policy Committee for a virement of £800 from Cost Centre 13, Budget no. 7111, Chantry Community Office to Cost Centre 14, Budget no. 7134, Public Conveniences, to allow the repairs to be carried out.**
- **That repairs are carried out to the High Street Public Convenience at a cost of £1,305.88 to be funded from Cost Centre 14, Budget no. 7134.**

Gillingham Town Council**Gillingham Enquiries – July 2021**

1. A fridge has been left next to the bin on the footpath between the Newbury railway bridge and the train station and a second fridge has been dumped under some bushes in the car park at Chantry. Reported to DWP ref DWP-FT348082992
2. Complaint received regarding the Sovereign Housing play area opposite Addison Close.
3. Complaint regarding the tree on the roundabout at Barnaby Mead – advised this is the responsibility of Dorset Council.
4. Gas Lane car park is overgrown bushes, particularly weeds around the pay meter - reported to Parking Services.
5. Blocked gulleys at Barnaby Mead - reported to Dorset Council.
6. Hawthorn growing over the river opposite Highbury, Kings Court Road – likely to cause a blockage later in the year – passed to Grounds team.
7. Resident from Oake Woods asked if we could do anything about the seagulls – explained we were unable to help.
8. Connells putting For Sale signs on the Lodbourne Terrace sign and the verge – raised with Dorset Council - DFY349843101.
9. The bins have not been collected for weeks in White House Court due to roadworks – contacted DWP.
10. Young people fornicating at the rear of the public toilets in the High Street Car Park – reported to Gillingham Safer Neighbourhood Team.
11. Complaint that the hedge at King Edmund Court has been cut too low – GTC met on site with resident to explain the situation and resolve the complaint.
12. Missed bin collection at Maple Way – advised to report to DWP.
13. Overhanging bush at Tower Houser, Queen Street – reported to Dorset Council ref – 1175499.
14. Overhanging trees coming from Rawson Court – reported to Dorset Council ref – 117549.

15. Complaint about noise from MUGA at Gyllas Green – GTC grounds team to check base boards.
16. Blocked drains on Le Neubourg Way near Wyke junction traffic light – reported to Dorset Highways 1175500.
17. Overhanging brambles coming from Natwest, Station Road – reported to Dorset Council ref – 1175494.
18. Overhanging brambles coming from old travel agent building – reported to Dorset Council ref 1175496.
19. Abandoned shopping trolley at junction of Broad Robin and Common Mead Lane.
20. Overhanging trees on Le Neubourg Way near Wyke traffic lights – reported to Dorset Council ref 1175497.
21. Missing bench at junction of Bay Road and Bowridge Hill – not with GTC, location of bench unknown.
22. Speeding traffic at Shaftesbury Road – reported to Traffic Management Sub-committee.

To check the status of a road or pavement problem [HERE](#) using the 7 digit reference.