



GILLINGHAM TOWN COUNCIL

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GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE MINUTES

The minutes of the **General Purposes Committee** meeting convened on **Monday, 2nd November 2020**, at 7.30pm. The meeting was held remotely using appropriate technology in accordance with The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020 (“the 2020 Regulations”) which came in to force on 4 April 2020.

Present

Cllr Mick Hill (Chair)	Cllr Dennis Griffin
Cllr Graham Poulter (Deputy Chair)	Cllr Paul Harris
Cllr Alison von Clemens	Cllr John Robinson
Cllr Barry von Clemens	Cllr Donna Toye
Cllr Fiona Cullen	Cllr Roger Weeks
Cllr Rupert Evill	Cllr Keith Wareham

Non-Members

Cllr Val Potheary

In Attendance

Town Clerk: Julie Hawkins

Deputy Town Clerk: Clare Ratcliffe

Press and Public

Press: Michael Streeter, Gillingham News.

Public: There were no members of the public present.

Minute no.	
147.	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.
148.	To receive and agree apologies for absence.
	There were no apologies for absence.
149.	To approve the minutes of the last meeting held on Monday 5th October 2020.
	It was agreed and RESOLVED to approve the minutes of the General Purposes Committee held on Monday, 5 th October 2020, as a true and accurate record. The minutes will be duly signed when it is possible to do so.
150.	Questions.
	There were no questions.

151.	To receive any declarations of interest. <u>Please note:</u> 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.
152.	To receive and consider reports from sub-committee and task and finish groups, as follows:
(a)	Allotments and Burials (sub-committee)
	Cllr Evill, Lead Member, reported that the sub-committee had held a meeting with a resident who had some queries regarding the cemetery rules. Cllr Evill will arrange a de-brief meeting to discuss the outcome of this meeting and the issues raised.
(b)	Annual Christmas Event and Festive Lighting (sub-committee)
	There was nothing to report this month.
(c)	Annual Remembrance Day Parade (sub-committee)
	Cllr Griffin referred to a proposed timetable for a Civic Act of Remembrance that had been circulated prior to the meeting. Due to the current pandemic and new Government guidelines the Royal British Legion will not be organising a Remembrance Day Parade this year. The Civic Act of Remembrance is an activity for up to six nominated members of the Town Council for wreath laying purposes only. Members of the public should not attend and instead being encouraged to stay at home, listen to services being broadcast on the TV and Radio and to make an Act of Remembrance on their doorsteps at 11am on Sunday, 9 th November.
(d)	Assets and Liabilities (sub-committee)
	This sub-committee has been disbanded. This item should have been omitted from the agenda.
(e)	Cycle link project – Gillingham to Motcombe (task and finish group)
	Cllr von Clemens reported that no progress has been made with this project due to the current pandemic.
(f)	Estate Management and Properties (sub-committee)
	Cllr von Clemens referred to a report that had been circulated prior to the meeting. Please refer to Appendix A . There were no recommendations or comments.
(g)	Health and Safety (sub-committee)
	Cllr Robinson reported that the meeting scheduled for 20 th October had been postponed to Wednesday, 11 th November 2020. Cllr Robinson was pleased to report that the necessary health and safety measures required for the refurbishment work at the new workshops are being carried out.
(h)	Traffic Management (sub-committee)
	Cllr Val Potheary, Lead Member, was present at the meeting and reported that while no formal sub-committee meeting has been held, she attended a site meeting with Cllr B von Clemens, Cllr Robinson and Roger Bell (DC Highways) to identify 6 no. sites for the installation of bicycle racks.
(i)	Events – Green Gillingham (task and finish group)
	Cllr von Clemens had nothing to report this month.

(j)	Gillingham Gateways (task and finish group)
	<p>Cllr Wareham referred to a report that had been circulated prior to the meeting. Please refer to Appendix B. The report contained two recommendations.</p> <p>It was agreed and RESOLVED that a Town Mural Project is supported and that a sum of £3,000 is included within budget for FY 2021/2022 towards a Town Mural as outlined in the grant application made to the South Western Railway.</p> <p>It was agreed and RESOLVED that three concrete plinths are installed on the roundabout at Ham and one concrete plinth at Peacemarth roundabout prior to the sculptures being erected for a fee of £1,000 and financed from earmarked reserves in the General Reserve for the Gateway Project.</p>
(k)	Gillingham Royal Forest Steering Group (DWT lead) (task and finish group)
	There was nothing to report this month.
(l)	Greener Gillingham (sub-committee)
	Cllr Cullen reported that she has been working on a Carbon Management Plan and intends to present this to the General Purposes Committee on Monday, 7 th December, 2020.
(m)	Town Seating and Planted Areas Refurbishment (task and finish group)
	There was nothing to report this month.
153.	To receive and consider information regarding Dorset Council car parks.
	<p>This item had been referred from Full Council. Please refer to Appendix C. Members considered whether a formal response should be made in response to the review of car parking charges. Several councillors voiced their objection to the proposals saying that it would be detrimental to the economy of the High Street, which is already in decline.</p> <p>Cllr B von Clemens informed the meeting that it has not been possible to use all the five free car parking sessions allocated to the town this year. The dates originally requested were to coincide with major events in the town, which had been cancelled due to the pandemic. It was suggested that a request is made to Dorset Council to use the free car parking sessions during December instead.</p> <p>It was agreed and RESOLVED that Cllr Poulter and the Town Clerk draft a letter in response to Dorset Council's review of car parking charges.</p> <p>It was agreed and RESOLVED that a request is made to Dorset Council for free car parking sessions on the following dates: Friday, 4th December/Saturday, 5th December, Friday, 11th December/Saturday, 12th December and Saturday, 19th December.</p>
154.	To receive a report on the monthly Gillingham Enquiries.
	A report on the activities of the Gillingham enquiry desk had been circulated prior to the meeting. Please refer to Appendix D .

155.	To receive matters pertinent to this meeting. <u>Please note:</u> Members are advised that inclusion of any item is at the Chairman's discretion and that a council cannot lawfully decide upon any matter which is not specified in the summons (agenda).
	There were no matters pertinent.
There being no other business on the agenda, the meeting closed at 8.05pm.	
Signed:	Date: 7 th December 2020
<hr style="width: 50%; margin: 0 auto;"/> Cllr Mick Hill Chairman, General Purposes Committee	
PLEASE NOTE: These minutes appear as draft minutes until reviewed and ratified by Full Council.	

Minute no. 152(f)

Gillingham Town Council

Estate Management and Properties Sub Committee

Thursday, 22nd October at 9.30am

Present: Cllr Barry von Clemens (Lead Member)
 Cllr Mike Gould
 Cllr Alan Frith
 Cllr John Kilcourse
 Simon Dobie, Works Manager
 Martin Down, Deputy Works Manager
 Mrs Clare Ratcliffe, Deputy Town Clerk (Convenor)

Absent: Cllr Graham Poulter
 Cllr Keith Wareham
 Mr Bob Messer, GANG

1. Complaint – Hawthorne Avenue

A complaint received from a resident at Hawthorne Avenue regarding a boundary fence and seat on the open space known as King Edmund Green was discussed.

The seat has been in situ for many years and is enjoyed by many. It is in a sheltered position and there is a view of the River Stour.

The boundary fence installed many years by a housing developer is failing. There is no need for fencing other than for aesthetic reasons. It would be costly to replace and there are no intentions for it to be replaced when it finally fails.

Cllr Frith volunteered to make a visit to the complainant (Covid permitting).

2. Tree Planting

Nearly all the trees have been delivered and will be planted within the next couple of weeks, including the tree that a resident would like planted at Chantry Fields.

Location	Type of Tree	Quantity
Leddington Drive	Acer - plantanoides Crimson King	5
Rolls Bridge	Italian Ader or Grey Alder	2
Rolls Bridge	Hornbeam -carpinus betulus	1
Ham Farm	Hornbeam - carpinus betulus	1
Ham Farm	Poplar - Populus tremula Erecta	1
Hawthorne Ave	Crabb Apple (edible)	1
Weatherby Road	Sweet Gum - Liquidamber sty Worplesdon	1
Chantry Fields	Cornelian Cherry	2

3. DWT – SNCI

SNCI (Site of Nature Conservation Interest)

Following biodiversity surveying carried out by DWT over the last couple of years, we were advised by DWT on 2nd March 2020 that our public open spaces could be considered for SNCI (Site of Nature Conservation Interest) status. Shreen Meadows has the most records for botanical interest.

Now that DWT Staff have returned to work from being furloughed for many months, it is hoped that progress can be made with this designation.

Site of Nature Conservation Interest (SNCI), is a designation used by local authorities for sites of substantive local nature conservation and geological value.

There are approximately 35,000 local sites in the UK, that make a vital contribution to delivering the UK and Local Biodiversity Action Plans and the Geodiversity Action Plan, as well as maintaining local natural character and distinctiveness.

Local sites do not have statutory protection (unless they are also SSSIs or LNRs), but local authorities are expected to take account of the need to protect them in deciding their planning and development policies.¹

Local sites are designated by local authorities in cooperation with Wildlife Trusts. The approach is similar to that used for the selection of biological Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), but the thresholds are lower.

Selection is primarily for habitats of inherent wildlife interest, but some sites may be selected for supporting rare or scarce species of plants or animals outside such habitats.

Once identified, designation and protection of the areas is done by local authorities through planning policies in their development plans. National government guidance (PPS 9) requires all development plans to include such policies.

For information on SNCI's owned by Dorset Council, please visit:

<https://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/countryside-coast-parks/countryside-management/countryside-site-designations/sites-of-nature-conservation-interest-snci.aspx>

4. Town Bridge Office

Cllr John Kilcourse reported that the office will be handed over on Friday, 23rd October at 9am.

Note: The hand over meeting took place as reported. There were a few snagging issues to be resolved due to unforeseen circumstances but otherwise the work has been completed in good order and a final inspection will be made shortly by Cllr Kilcourse/Simon Dobie (Covid permitting).

5. Play Areas - Marlott Road Play Area

The play area at Marlott Road was completed in good order and on time. The installers were very good and kept the site clean and tidy during their occupation. The play area has been inspected and is ready for use. Temporary fencing has been installed pending the installation of metal fencing, for which quotations will be sought shortly. A press release has been issued.

6. Groundworks – Maple Way

These works have stalled for various reasons. The work needs to be completed by 23rd December before the colder weather comes after Christmas. Works Manager to chase.

7. Gillingham Action for Nature Group – New Community Orchard

Bob Messer was unable to attend due to technical difficulties. The Community Orchard Project is progressing. A suitable site has been chosen on the public open space at Upper Lodden and permission granted by the General Purposes Committee on 1st June 2020. GANG will be supplying the fruit trees and will arrange for volunteers to help plant on either Saturday, 23rd November or Saturday, 28th November (Covid and weather permitting).

8. Sherborne Estates – Land behind Waitrose

Cllr Gould asked whether GANG were going to keep this area tidy or whether it was possible for GTC to keep the area tidy. The area is becoming messy, since it was cut back by Sherborne Estates in the early summer.

The Works Manager confirmed that this area could be kept tidy, it is adjacent to a public open space and would be easy to do.

9. Works Manager's Report

- Play area inspections carried out
- Temporary fencing sourced and erected
- Hedge flailing – tidying up / chipping
- Last grass cut done
- New planters installed and now in situ
- Repaired bench seating
- Work on new workshop
- Compost bins removed at allotments, as requested
- Winter bedding planted
- Trees have been mulched and tidied
- Hedge cutting commenced
- All play equipment pressure washed
- 2 x cremations
- 2 x burials
- 5-year wiring test
- PAT testing
- Repairs to back door at Town Hall
- Office move, within Town Hall
- Orienteering trial – erection of signs and markers
- Maintenance of equipment and machinery
- Meetings
- Xmas trees

10. Date of Next Meeting

Thursday, 3rd December (TBC)

11. Recommendation

There were no recommendations.

Gillingham Town Council

Gillingham Gateways – Update

Author: Cllr Keith Wareham/Deputy Town Clerk

1. MURAL PROJECT

1.1 Station Road Mural

- To erect a large mural depicting the history of Gillingham Station from inauguration in 1859 to date.

Progress to date

- A grant application has been submitted to South Western Railway for the sum of £13k
- Outline discussions have taken place with potential mural designers.
- Outline discussion has taken place with the Gillingham Local History Society. They have a large digitalised collection of photographs and are happy to make these available.
- Location sites are either Gillingham Station or the red brick wall in Station Road (building occupied by Dorset Hire/Sandy's and owned by Nick Baker). Nick Baker is fully supportive.
- Liaison with Rob Hodgkinson, Franchise and Access Manager, Network Rail, about the best location for the mural.

Proposed Timescales

- If grant funding is approved, funds will be available for the fiscal year commencing April 2021
- Agree, in principle, the actual site and size of the mural by end 2020, if possible
- Discuss potential mural designs and agree (in principle) the artist by end Jan 2021
- Appoint artist by end Feb 2021
- Mural design to be completed by end May 2021
- Mural to be erected late summer 2021

1.2 Town Trail Mural

- To erect a series of murals around the town depicting our history from the first settlement to date
- This is very much a secondary project but will hopefully follow in quick succession once the Station Road mural is underway.
- The project will be supported by the Blackmore Vale Community Rail Partnership, who have applied to South West Railway for funding.

2 ENTRANCE SIGNAGE

Dorset Council have agreed to progress all four entrance signs without sponsorship, for the time being (alternative sponsors will be sourced later). Initially, Dorset Council will fund the signage raised from the sponsorship of the roundabouts.

Permission for self-watering flower containers to be attached to the new signage has been requested.

3 ROUNDABOUT LANDSCAPING

The roundabout landscaping was agreed at Full Council on Monday, 26th October. Whilst DC Highway Safety objected to a Silver Birch tree being planted on the roundabout, a final discussion with Mark Potter of DC Highway Safety will hopefully take place soon.

Three concrete plinths that are required to site the sculptures will cost an additional £1,000. Originally this work was going to be undertaken by the grounds team.

4. RECOMMENDATIONS

- **That a Town Mural Project is supported and that a sum of £3,000 is included within budget for FY 2021/2022 towards the Town Mural as outlined in the grant application made to the South Western Railway.**
- **That three concrete plinths are installed at Ham roundabout and one concrete plinth at Peacemarsh roundabout prior to the sculptures being erected for a fee of £1,000 to be financed from earmarked reserves held in the General Reserve for the Gateway project.**

Minute no. 153

Proposed Car Parking Charges by Dorset Council

Email correspondence received from Dorset Council in mid October, as follows:

Dear Sir/Madam

I am writing to inform you of Dorset Council public car park changes that may affect your local area.

A project was started in January 2020 to look at car park charges across the new Dorset Council area. It was considered that car park charges were not consistent or fair and that changes needed to be made. As well as this, some charges had not been reviewed for several years.

It is the intention of Dorset Council to charge from 8am to 8pm, Monday to Sunday in all Dorset Council public car parks. This will mean a longer charging day and charging on Sunday. As per our legal duty, notices of this change will be published two weeks before the change date.

To continue to support local business, Dorset Council intends to update the Parking Policy. The change is as follows:

- Four days each year when the Town Councils can use the Dorset Council public car parks for events which generate valuable footfall for businesses. The four days cannot be used during weekends in December.
- Free parking in all Dorset Council public car parks on Small Business Saturday in December
- Free parking in all Dorset Council public car parks on one weekday in December

Finally, I would like to direct you to a consultation on Shoppers Permits that Parking Services is undertaking, that will be available on the Dorset Council website in the next few weeks.

Shoppers Permits have been running in West Dorset for 23 years. Their original purpose was to entice residents into shopping locally by giving them heavily discounted parking in local short stay car parks; it is felt that this is something that is still very relevant now. The consultation will explore the potential to create a Dorset Council wide Shoppers Permit. Your support in completing this questionnaire would be much appreciated so that a decision on viability can be made.

Should you have any queries or comments regarding any of the notices in this letter then please contact elizabeth.murray@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk Queries/comments would be appreciated within four weeks from receipt of this email.

Yours sincerely,

Matthew Piles

Corporate Director for Economic Growth and Infrastructure

Gillingham Town Council
Gillingham Enquiries October - November 2020

	Issue	Reference No.
1	Temporary traffic lights at New Road are stuck on red.	DC
2	Complaint received regarding the removal of a shrub from a grave by GTC staff. This was an authorised removal as shrubs are not permitted to be planted on graves.	
3	No entry sign on the left of Station Road, could be confused as applying it to Buckingham Road	
4	Fence broken at Hawthorne Avenue open space.	GTC
5	Overhanging tree branches at 49 Hawthorne Avenue.	
6	The tin foil recycling container at Chantry car park is full.	DWP
7	Fencing down near the gate into the fields from Hall Farm.	
8	Trees overhanging from Rawson Court	DC 1156706
9	Trees overhanging from The Elms, Newbury	DC 1156707
10	The low retaining wall supporting the pavement has been hit near the entrance to Knapp House	DC 1156711
11	Flooding issue on the Shaftesbury Road approaching Loddon Bridge heading out of town. The water is coming up through a utility cover and pedestrians are getting soaked.	DC 1157121
12	A road works sign has been left at the Gyllas Way junction and keeps blowing over.	DC 1157125
13	Topsie Rabbit requested signage to slow the traffic whilst the children are queuing outside.	DC Roger Bell
14	The foil bins in Chantry car park are full. These are emptied by Stour Quest charity and due to covid-19 have not been able to empty them.	DWP will schedule them in.
15	There are weeds in Chantry car park.	GTC
16	Replace the missing bin on the Town Meadow. This has been carried out	GTC
17	The kerbs at Barnaby Mead need sweeping. This is due to the autumn leaf fall.	
18	A crab apple tree has been felled at Barnaby Mill. This was carried out by the owners of Barnaby Mill.	
19	There is some gravel on the pavement at Barnaby Mead.	