

## Higham Ferrers Town Council

### Notes of Library Working Party – Friday 19<sup>th</sup> January 2018 – 10am at the Town Hall

**Present:** Cllr B Prigmore (Chairman), Cllr Mrs A Gardner (Vice-Chairman), Cllr H L Jackson, Cllr R Gell, Cllr Mrs A Sauntson, Mrs S J Mitcham (Town Clerk)

#### 1. Elect a Chairman

It was agreed to elect Cllr B Prigmore as Chairman.

#### 2. Elect a Vice-Chairman.

It was agreed to elect Cllr Mrs A Gardner as Vice-Chairman.

#### 3. Update from Town Clerk.

The Town Clerk reported that out of the 21 Libraries under threat, 20 had submitted an 'Informal Expression of Interest' to manage the Library, in order to keep the door open on discussions.

The following points came up in discussion:-

- Closing the Library was the issue
- There was a need to detach the building from the Library.
- Need to look at feasibility of buying the building.
- Condition survey of building needed to assess cost of altering it.
- Concern at possible endless cost of things.
- There were 2/3 options to be considered.
- Will modernising the building affect the structural integrity?
- Potentially cost £100,000 years down the line.
- Cost of health and safety, disabled access first floor, caretakers, cleaners, fire protection.
- Public feeling was strong about the importance of the groups that meet there and the value that brings.
- Need to talk to groups and assess their needs to see if they can be accommodated elsewhere. Need to assess capacity of other buildings in the town.
- As an option if facilities could be accommodated elsewhere temporarily the Council could then work on the potential new building on Saffron Rd Recreation Ground to accommodate the requirements.
- Cllr Gardener mentioned Brixworth, where a building accommodated the library, 'One Stop Shop' for Council services, internet café as well as meeting rooms.

#### 4. Agreed Actions

- Speak to the groups at the library including CANDO about their needs.
- Speak to Bede house, Bowls Club, Working Men's Club, Band Club, Higham Sports and Social Club, Rushden Bowls Club, Methodist Church to assess availabilities.
- Speak to Drs Surgery to ask whether there was any vacant space and look at vacant shop units.
- Town Clerk would commission survey and valuation and obtain a price for a porta cabin.

#### 5. Date of Next Meeting

Tuesday 30<sup>th</sup> January at 1.30pm at the Library.