

**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF HIGHAM FERRERS TOWN**  
**COUNCIL HELD ON MONDAY 26<sup>TH</sup> MAY 2020 AT 7.30PM**  
**USING ZOOM VIDEO CONFERENCING**

**PRESENT:**

	The Mayor (Councillor Mrs C Reavey)	
	The Deputy Mayor (Councillor B Prigmore)	
Councillor Mrs P H Whiting		Councillor J Smithers
Councillor H L Jackson		Councillor D C Lawson MBE
Councillor P Tomas		Councillor N Brown
Councillor C P O 'Rourke		Councillor Mrs S Mantle
Councillor A M T Reading		Councillor B Spencer
Councillor V J Paul		
Mrs S J Mitcham (Town Clerk)		Ms A J Schofield (Assistant Clerk)
David Wicks (Mayors' Sergeant)		

**IN ATTENDANCE:** 5 Members of the Public

The meeting was opened with prayers led by Reverend Michelle Dalliston.

20/78      **ELECTION OF MAYOR** (Proposer: Councillor C P O'Rourke, Seconder: Councillor A M T Reading)

**RESOLVED:**

That Councillor Mrs Christina REAVEY be elected as Mayor of Higham Ferrers for the period to the next Annual Meeting of the Town Council.

Councillor Reavey said that being elected as Mayor is a great privilege. It is also an honour and responsibility and I thank my fellow councillors for trusting me with this role. I am committed to serving the people of Higham Ferrers to the best of my ability with pride and integrity while acknowledging that I represent the collective viewpoint of all our elected councillors. I acknowledge the combined efforts of this group of councillors, and those councillors who have come before us, in helping make Higham Ferrers what it is today.

I would like to thank our outgoing Mayor, Cllr Chris O'Rourke, and his Mayoress, Kathleen. They have been totally committed to Higham Ferrers. Chris brought energy and enthusiasm to the role and is going to be a hard act to follow. It is reassuring to know that I can rely on their support throughout my term of office.

My husband Tony will be my consort. He will be supporting me and accompanying me to events, of course that is as soon as the restrictions of this pandemic are lifted.

I also welcome Cllr Barry Prigmore as my Deputy. Barry became a councillor a couple of months ahead of me. We have worked together on several committees and working parties. I'm sure that he will assist me well with my role as Mayor. I hope that he enjoys his role as Deputy Mayor.

Although I was born in The Yorkshire Dales I have lived in Northamptonshire for 35 years with 25 of those being in Higham Ferrers. Like some of you I have witnessed many changes not only in the size of our historic town but also along the High Street. However, no changes were as quick as those that responded to Covid 19 pandemic. Businesses were closed overnight. The towns food outlets stepped up to provide our residents with home deliveries and a click and collect

service. Social distancing signs appeared to remind customers that only one or two of them may enter a shop. I sincerely hope that more of our businesses will be up and running soon, I for one would love a haircut and to meet up with friends for a coffee.

Offices had to close their doors to the public including the Town Hall. I would like to thank our Town Clerk and staff for their flexibility and diligence during lockdown. They have maintained a point of contact for us councillors and our residents.

I have given a lot of thought to the charity that I will support throughout my term of office. I doubt very much that I will be able to hold many events, in fact probably not until next year, and certainly not as passed mayors have done. I propose to only have one charity that would hopefully directly benefit people of our community. My charity will be Higham Ferrers Community.

I will of course keep you informed of my plans and hope for your support.

Thank you

20/79

**APOLOGIES**

Councillor Mrs A M Sauntson, Cllr D Hamblin, Cllr Mrs A Gardner.

20/80.

**ELECTION OF DEPUTY MAYOR** (Proposer: The Mayor (Councillor Mrs C Reavey), Seconder: Councillor N Brown)

**RESOLVED:**

That Councillor Barry Prigmore be elected as Deputy Mayor of Higham Ferrers for the period to the next Annual Meeting of the Town Council.

Councillor Prigmore spoke to offer his support to the Mayor. There have been many changes in Higham Ferrers, especially in the last few months. It will be a very different year ahead and the town will come out of these difficult times stronger.

20/81

**VOTE OF THANKS TO OUTGOING MAYOR** (Proposer: Councillor Mrs P H Whiting, Seconder: Councillor P Tomas)

**RESOLVED:**

That the Council on behalf of the people of Higham Ferrers thank Chris for all his work throughout the year.

Councillor Mrs P H Whiting was pleased to be able to say that on behalf of Higham Ferrers Town Council, I would like to thank the retiring Mayor, Councillor Chris O'Rourke most sincerely for the excellent manner in which you have carried out the role of Mayor during this past year. Can I also thank your Mayoress, Kathleen, for all the help and support she has given you, and I think we can now officially call her "the Queen of Raffles". You have both represented the Town at as many Civic Functions as possible, both here in Higham Ferrers and also across neighbouring counties, which is a credit to you both. I am sure, from past experience, that some events were far more enjoyable than others, but well done for all the travelling you have undertaken to not only attend these functions but to support fellow "Mayors and Chairs" and made lots of new friends along the way.

Over the year you have organised several very successful events, which have all been very well attended, and as a result you have raised a tremendous amount of money for your very worthwhile charities, and I am only sorry that due to the present circumstances it has meant cancellation of three final events you had

planned. Hopefully there will be another opportunity in a few years, to do it all again, but in the meantime thank you so much Chris for all your hard work, and I know I speak for us all when I say it has been a pleasure to work alongside you, and I wish you the very best for the future.

20/82. **ELECTION OF LEADER** (Proposer: Councillor A M T Reading, Seconder: Councillor Mrs S A Mantle)

**RESOLVED:**

That Councillor Mrs Pam H WHITING be elected as Leader of the Town Council.

20/83. **ELECTION OF DEPUTY LEADER** (Proposer: Councillor Mrs P H Whiting, Seconder: The Mayor (Councillor Mrs C Reavey))

**RESOLVED:**

That Councillor Herbert L JACKSON be elected as Deputy Leader of the Town Council.

20/84. **APPOINTMENT OF THE MAYOR'S CHAPLAIN.**

The Mayor reported that she had appointed Reverend Michelle Dalliston to be the Mayor's Chaplain during her period of office.

20/85. **COMMITTEES**

**RESOLVED:**

That the Committees of the Town Council for the period to the next Annual Meeting be in accordance with the list now circulated.

20/86. **DATES OF MEETINGS 2020/21**

**RESOLVED:**

That the days and times for the Committees and the Town Council Meetings for 2020/21, including Statutory Meetings, be fixed in accordance with the list now circulated.

20/87. **JOHN WHITE HOMES (WAR MEMORIAL) TRUST**

**RESOLVED:**

That the Mayor (Councillor Mrs C Reavey) and the Deputy Mayor (Councillor B Prigmore) be appointed as the 'Corporation Trustees' to the **John White Homes (War Memorial) Trust** for the period to the next Annual Meeting of the Town Council.

20/88. **APPOINTMENT OF REPRESENTATIVES**

**RESOLVED:**

That the representatives to the Higham Ferrers/Hachenburg Twinning Association for the period to the next Annual Meeting of the Town Council be:

The Mayor (Councillor Mrs C Reavey)

The Deputy Mayor (Councillor B Prigmore)

Councillor H L Jackson

20/88/1. It was further **RESOLVED:**

That Councillor H L Jackson and Cllr Mrs A Gardner be appointed to the Joint Action Group.

20/88.2. It was further **RESOLVED:**

That the Mayor (Councillor Mrs C Reavey) and the Deputy Mayor (Councillor Mr B Prigmore) be appointed to the Northamptonshire Association of Local Councils.

- 20/88.3. It was further **RESOLVED:**  
That Councillor B Spencer be appointed as the representative to the Higham Ferrers Angling Association.
- 20/88.4. It was further **RESOLVED:**  
That R J Gell be appointed as Parish Tree Warden and Mrs Marion Darnell as Parish Paths Co-ordinator.
- 20/89. **CHICHELE EDUCATION FOUNDATION  
RESOLVED:**  
That Councillor H L Jackson and Councillor D C Lawson MBE be nominated as Trustees to the Chichele Education Foundation.
- 20/90. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**  
None.
- 20/91. **MINUTES  
RESOLVED:**  
That the minutes of the meeting held on the 28<sup>th</sup> April 2020 be signed by the Mayor as being a true and correct record.
- 20/92. **PUBLIC FORUM (15 minutes)**  
None.
- 20/93. **TOWN CLERK'S REPORT  
Police Report**  
Link to the report for March 2020 <https://www.streetcheck.co.uk/crime/nn108bt>
- RESOLVED:**  
That the Town Clerks Report be received and noted.
- 20/94. **FINANCE**
- 20/94.1. **To approve accounts for payment as at 28th May 2020.  
RESOLVED:**  
That the accounts for payment total of £25,652.16 as at 28th May 2020 be approved for payment. Copy attached to the minutes.
- 20/94.2. **To approve the bank account reconciliation as at 30th April 2020.  
RESOLVED:**  
That the bank account reconciliation as at 30<sup>th</sup> April 2020 be signed by the Mayor after being checked by Cllr Mrs P H Whiting.
- 20/94.3. **To receive and note the budget report as at 30<sup>th</sup> April 2020.  
RESOLVED:**  
That the budget report as at 30<sup>th</sup> April 2020 be received and noted.
- 20/94.4. **To approve the following expenditure: -**  
(i) **Pothole repairs to car park opposite Henry Chichele School  
RESOLVED:**

That the pothole repairs to the car park opposite Henry Chichele School be undertaken at a cost of £2655.

(ii) **Painting of the main entrance gates to St Mary's Church**

**RESOLVED:**

That the main entrance gates to St Mary's Church be re-painted at a cost of £340.

20/95. **COMMITTEE MEETINGS**

20/95.1. **To receive and adopt the minutes of the following committees: -**

**Planning and Development Committee held on the 12<sup>th</sup> May 2020.**

**RESOLVED:**

That the minutes of the Planning and Development Committee held on the 12<sup>th</sup> May 2020 be received and adopted.

20/95.2. **Environment and Recreation Committee held on the 12<sup>th</sup> May 2020.**

**RESOLVED:**

That the minutes of the Environment and Recreation Committee held on the 12<sup>th</sup> May 2020 be received and adopted.

**Recommendations**

(i) **RESURFACING OF THE FOOTPATH ON PHASE 6**

**RESOLVED:**

That the footpath on Phase 6 be resurfaced with tarmac at a cost of £12750.

(ii) **SCATTERING OF ASHES AREA AT THE CEMETERY**

**RESOLVED:**

That improvement works be undertaken to the scattering of ashes area at the Cemetery as follows:

- Installation of a polished black stone memorial structure to include ceramic plaque Town Council logo, gold border and gold leaf lettering at a cost of £956 including installation.
- Additional planting of evergreen shrubs, ornamental tree and bulbs. Budget cost for purchase £250 with planting and maintenance to be undertaken by volunteers.
- Provision of summer and winter bedding plants. The plants to be added to the ENC Grounds Maintenance Contract for purchase, planting, and maintenance with a budget cost of £640 per annum. Watering is to be undertaken by the Park Wardens.

20/96. **END OF YEAR ACCOUNTS 2019/20**

20/96.1. **Annual Internal Audit Report 2019/20.**

**RESOLVED:**

That the Annual Internal Audit Report 2019/20 be received and noted.

20/96.2. **Annual Governance Statement 2019/20.**

**RESOLVED:**

That the Annual Governance Statement 2019/20 be approved and completed.

20/96.3. **Annual Accounting Statements 2019/20.**

**RESOLVED:**

That the Annual Accounting Statements 2019/20 be approved.

20/96.4 **Budget Report for 2019/20.**

**RESOLVED:**

That the Annual Budget Report for 2019/20 be received and noted.

20/97 **INCREASED LIMITS ON THE CORPORATE MULTI-PAY CARD**

**RESOLVED:**

That the limits on the Corporate multi-pay card be increased to £1000 in any one month and £500 for any one transaction.

20/98. **WORKING PARTIES**

**RESOLVED:**

That the Farmers Market and Town Working Party merge with membership agreed as:-

- Cllr Mrs A Gardener
- Cllr Mrs C Reavey
- Cllr B Prigmore
- Cllr C O'Rourke
- Cllr Mrs P Whiting
- Cllr N Brown

That the Higham Times Working Party is no longer required and that the Policy and Resources Committee will have an overview of the Higham Times.

That the following working parties and their membership be confirmed as:-

<p><b>Christmas Sparkle Working Party</b>  Mayor (Cllr Mrs C Reavey)  Deputy Mayor (Cllr B Prigmore)  Cllr Mrs P Whiting  Cllr Mrs A Gardner  Cllr H L Jackson  Representative from Tourism  Representative from Methodist Church  Representative from St Mary's Church</p>	<p><b>Community Centre Working Party</b>  Cllr Mrs A Gardner  Cllr C Spencer  Cllr V J Paul  Cllr Mrs C Reavey  Cllr C O'Rourke  Cllr H L Jackson  Cllr Mrs S Mantle</p>
<p><b>Royal Working Party</b>  Mayor (Cllr Mrs C Reavey)  Deputy Mayor (Cllr B Prigmore)  David Wicks  Rev Michell Dalliston  Rev Margaret Eales</p>	<p><b>Charters Working Party</b>  Cllr H L Jackson  Cllr Mrs A Sauntson  Cllr P Tomas  Cllr A M T Reading  Carol Fitzgerald  Gwen Tobin  Brenda Lofthouse</p>
<p><b>Climate Change Working Party</b>  Cllr V J Paul  Cllr Mrs A Gardner  Cllr P Tomas  Cllr T Reavey  Cllr H L Jackson</p>	

20/99. **REQUEST FOR SUPPORT FOR A COMMUNITY DEFIBRILLATOR ON THE CARRIAGE HOUSE**

**RESOLVED:**

That consideration of a request from the Rotary Club of Rushden for support for a community defibrillator mounted in the recessed archway of the Carriage House be deferred to ascertain the maintenance costs associated with the defibrillator.

- 20/100. **COVID-19**  
20/100.1. **Use of Parks and Open spaces**  
**RESOLVED:**  
That the report from the Clerk be received and noted.
- 20/100.2. **Verbal Updates and Actions Required by the Town Council**  
None.
- 20/101. **UNREASONABLE COMPLAINANT BEHAVIOUR**  
**RESOLVED:**  
That the resident corresponding re LED lighting and 5G be dealt with under the Policy for dealing with Unreasonable Complainant Behaviour Policy.
- 20/102. **CLOSURE OF MEETING TO PUBLIC AND PRESS**  
**RESOLVED:**  
That in accordance with Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 and by reason of the confidential nature of the following items of business, the Press and the Public be excluded from the meeting.
- 20/103. **PERSONNEL COMMITTEE**  
It was suggested that lone working practices and the Lone Working Policy be reviewed for the next meeting of the Personnel Committee.  
**RESOLVED:**  
That the minutes of the Personnel Committee held on the 19<sup>th</sup> May 2020 be received and adopted.
- 20/104. **RE-OPEN THE MEETING TO THE PUBLIC AND PRESS**  
**RESOLVED:**  
That the confidential business having been concluded, the Press and Public be re-admitted to the meeting.
- 20/105. **ITEMS TO REPORT**  
Cllr C P O'Rourke requested an agenda item seeking approval for the placement of a commemorative VE Day seat on the Market Square.

**Mayor**

**Date**