

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF HIGHAM FERRERS TOWN COUNCIL HELD ON
TUESDAY 20th DECEMBER 2016 AT THE TOWN HALL AT 7.30PM.**

PRESENT:

	The Mayor (Councillor Mrs P H Whiting)	
	The Deputy Mayor (Councillor P Tomas)	
Councillor R J Gell		Councillor Mrs V M Newbery
Councillor R D Hamblin		Councillor B A Prigmore
Councillor H L Jackson		Councillor C P O'Rourke
Councillor D C Lawson MBE		Councillor A M T Reading
Councillor Mrs S Mantle		Councillor Mrs T Reavey
Councillor Mrs O J Mayes		Councillor Mrs A M Sauntson
Mrs S J Mitcham (Town Clerk)		Miss A Schofield (Assistant Town Clerk)

IN ATTENDANCE: PC David Bryan, PCSO Lisa Ward

16/324. **APOLOGIES**

Cllr D Drage, Cllr J Smithers and District Councillor G Harwood MBE.

16/325. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Other Interests

Cllr Mrs P H Whiting, item 10.3 (i), daughter resident of Blackwell Close. Item 10.1 Chq no. 300305 Mayor's Christmas card expenses.

Cllr Mrs O J Mayes, item 10.1, receipt of Chq 300305.

Cllr D C Lawson MBE, item 15, resident of Mallard Close

Cllr P Tomas, item 15, resident of Mallard Close

16/326. **MINUTES**

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 29th November 2016 be signed by the Mayor as being a true and accurate record.

16/327. **POLICING**

The crime figures were not available for presentation to the meeting so PCSO Simon Arthur will be asked to provide a copy. Cllr D C Lawson MBE questioned the regularity of patrols and the use of CCTV footage for addressing Saffron Road Park issues. The Police assured Council that Saffron Road is part of the regular patrol loop for the town. Groups of youths had not been seen on recent patrols. In the wider area crime levels have increased, in particular, shop lifting, burglaries and car thefts, with such an increase often occurring at this time of year. Regular burglary patrols are made of the housing estates. There has also been a string of robberies in the wider area at convenience shops and betting shops and these are currently under investigation. Cllr Mrs V M Newbery sought an update following the attack on a man on Saturday night near the Market Square. PC Bryan will make enquiries regarding this incident. Council were advised that Inspector Julie Mead had been replaced by Inspector Lara Alexander-Lloyd. Police officer numbers will be retained but there will be movement into different roles. Patrols will be undertaken primarily by PCSOs. Cllr D C Lawson MBE sought an update on the Parish Constable scheme. PC Bryan was not certain if there had been any volunteers in the area and will enquire on behalf of Council.

16/328. **PUBLIC FORUM**

No public present.

16/329. **MAYORS ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Mayor reported on the events she had attended:-

- Friday 2nd December - Junior School to judge the post box competition.
- Tuesday 6th December - Serve Carol Service at Park Road Baptist Church, with 3 schools taking part.
- Friday 9th December - The Shrubbery Christmas Fayre.
- Friday 9th December - Mayor of Rushden's Carol Service at The Heritage Centre.
- Sunday 11th December - Province of Northamptonshire Masonic Carol Service at Peterborough Cathedral.
- Wednesday 14th December - United Charities Christmas Party for the people in the Alms Houses and the Pressland Pensioners.
- Friday 17th December – Presentation of prizes at the Farmers Market to Jamie and Daniel who won the Gargoyle Competition and Mary Jane of Colemans who won the Best Dressed Window competition.
- Sunday 18th December - The HIFARS Christmas Lecture on the Black Death in the Bede House.
- Sunday 18th December - The Town Carol Service.

Unfortunately the Mayor could not attend the Carol Service at Huntingdon on Monday 12th due to being under the weather and thanks were passed to the Deputy Mayor for attending the NN10 Choir Concert in Rushden on the 10th December and Corby's Civic Service on 11th December.

16/330. **TOWN CLERKS REPORT
CCTV**

A report on the activity for November as circulated.

Henry Chichele School Parking

The extension is due to finish in June. Phase 1 will be finished around February/March. The Town Clerk, Cllr D C Lawson MBE and Cllr Mrs T Reavey met with the Head, Bursar, Chair of Governors and the Education Authority to discuss complaints that had been received about parking and safety issues. It was clear at the meeting that the safety of the children is paramount and a great deal of thought and planning has gone into how to manage the children entering and exiting the school whilst building works are in progress. There are more teachers outside the school building, meet and greet for people with difficulties has been arranged and there is leniency on lateness due to having to park further away. The parking opposite is for staff only and when all staff are present, there is not enough space. Builders are monitored to ensure that they are parking considerately. Police and traffic wardens have been in attendance at times, but several of the roads around the area are not adopted which means no enforcement action can be taken. The school were not aware of some of the issues that have been raised with the Council and they urged anyone with issues to contact them directly. Open evenings had been arranged to talk about the works and arrangements, but these were not well attended. Before Christmas they would be undertaking another survey about how people travel to school and asking for comments.

Christmas Closing Hours

The office will close on Friday 23rd December at midday and re-open on Tuesday 3rd January 2017 at 9am.

Cllr R D Hamblin sought clarity regarding the school parking. The Clerk advised that

temporary measurers were in place at the moment and once the building works were complete the staff cars would return to the school car park where the contractors cabins are currently located. The school are also exploring the option of restricting non-school traffic from using the road to the school as it is known to be used as a local short cut. Cllr R J Gell's understanding is that Phase 4 roads were adopted in 2014 by the County Council.

RESOLVED:

That the Town Clerk's report be received and noted.

16/331. **QUESTIONS**

Cllr A M T Reading queried the progress of the bus stop on Station Road. The Clerk advised the matter was regularly chased with the developers who had reported that the metal for the roof and the perspex for the sides are due in the next 3 weeks.

Cllr Mrs S A Mantle informed of a faulty street light by the pavilion. The Clerk will ensure the street light is reported for repair.

16/332. **REPORTS OF REPRESENTATIVES TO OTHER BODIES**

Cllr R D Hamblin attended the inauguration for the Methodist Church where the plans for the future of the church were presented.

16/333. **FINANCE**

16/333.1. **To approve accounts for payment as at 20th December 2016.**

RESOLVED:

That the updated accounts for payment total of £41,781.02 be approved for payment.

16/333.2. **To approve the bank account reconciliation as at 30th November 2016.**

RESOLVED:

That the bank reconciliation as at 30th November 2016 be signed by the Mayor after being checked by Cllr D C Lawson MBE.

16/333.3. **To approve the following expenditure:-**

(i) **Repairs to fencing on the Parker Way Open Space.**

RESOLVED:

That the matter be deferred to allow the Clerk to undertake a site inspection and to obtain additional quotes.

(ii) **Purchase of equipment for Community Payback volunteers £596.41.**

RESOLVED:

That equipment at a total of £596.41 be purchased for the Community Payback volunteers. This would be funded by Councillor Empowerment monies for Cllr R J Gell.

16/334. **COMMITTEE MEETINGS**

Planning and Development Committee held on 6th December 2016.

16/334.1. **RESOLVED:**

That the minutes of the Planning and Development Committee held 6th December 2016 be received and adopted.

16/334.2. **Policy and Resources Committee held on 6th December 2016.**

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Policy and Resources Committee held 6th December 2016 be received and adopted.

Recommendations:

(i) **Grant application, Higham Ferrers Bowls Club**

RESOLVED:

That a grant of £3,000 be given to Higham Ferrers Bowls Club for 2017/18 toward maintenance of the green. The club to be asked to attempt to provide 3 estimates for the work.

(ii) **Grant application, Higham Ferrers Cricket Club**

RESOLVED:

That a grant of £1,330 be given to Higham Ferrers Cricket Club for 2017/18 towards the maintenance of the wicket.

(iii) **Rushden-Higham Link**

RESOLVED:

That the Council continue subsidising the Rushden-Higham bus link by up to £5,616 in 2017/18.

(iv) **Alteration to Town Hall Offices**

RESOLVED:

That a budget be set of £1,200 for alterations to the Town Hall Office and purchase of desk and chair for the Town Manager.

(v) **Budgets 2017/18**

RESOLVED:

That the budgets for 2017/18 as per the attached report be agreed.

(vi) **Precept 2017/18**

RESOLVED:

That the precept figure be £340,000 for 2017/18.

16/335. **TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT**

RESOLVED:

That the report from the Town Manager be received and noted. That the Town Manager be commended for the work she has undertaken and the Clerk to pass on thanks from the Council.

16/336. **SEALING OF DEED**

RESOLVED:

That the Transfer Deed from the Highways Agency for the 'Exchange Land' on Stanwick Road be sealed.

16/337. **URBAN HIGHWAY GRASS MOWING 2017**

RESOLVED:

That the s.136 Agreement be entered with Northamptonshire County Council for the verge mowing for 2017.

16/338. **MALLARD CLOSE WORKING PARTY**

16/338.1. **RESOLVED:**

That the notes of the Working Party held on 23rd November 2016 circulated be received and noted.

16/338.2. **RESOLVED:**

That the area at the end of Mallard Close be used for recreation and the options be researched for consideration by the Environment and Recreation Committee.

16./339. **VEHICLE WORKING PARTY**

RESOLVED:

That the members of the Working Party be Cllr R J Gell, Cllr H L Jackson and Cllr Mrs T Reavey.

16/340. **PARKS AND OPEN SPACES WARDEN**

RESOLVED:

That the appointment of Chris Butcher as Parks and Open Spaces Warden for 10 hours a week on salary scale point SCP 11 be ratified.

16/341. **COMMUNITY FACILITIES FUND**

16/341.1 **MUGA Improvements**

The Clerk reported the recommended application figure had been reduced by £1,000 to demonstrate a stronger case for match funding.

RESOLVED:

That the Council submit an application to Stage 2 of the Community Facilities Fund for £12,500 towards the MUGA refurbishment.

16/341.2 **Extension to the Greenway**

RESOLVED:

That the Council submit an application to Stage 2 of the Community Facilities Fund for £40,000 towards the extension of the Greenway.

16/342. **MARKET SQUARE CAR PARK**

RESOLVED:

That the figure of £21,676.40 be submitted to Highways for back maintenance of the Market Square Car Park.

16/343. **USE OF CASTLE FIELDS FOR A CIRCUS 2017**

A request has been received for a reduced fee to use Castle Fields for a Circus from 18th to 20th April 2017.

RESOLVED:

That a security deposit of £500 be obtained and a fee of £50 per day be charged for the use of Castle Fields for a Circus 18th to 20th April 2017.

16/344. **RUSHDEN LAKES**

16/344.1. **RESOLVED:**

That the notes circulated from the Rushden Lakes Working Party held on 5th December 2016 be received and noted.

16/344.2. **RESOLVED:**

That Cllr D C Lawson MBE be appointed as the substitute Councillor for the Rushden Lakes Working Party meetings.

16/345. **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.

16/346. **RUSHDEN EAST**

RESOLVED:

That the report circulated on the Rushden East Board meeting held on 13th December 2016 be received and noted.

16/347. **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.

16/348. **ITEMS TO REPORT**

None.

Mayor

Date