

**MINUTES OF A STATUTORY MEETING OF HIGHAM FERRERS TOWN COUNCIL HELD
ON TUESDAY 24TH FEBRUARY 2015 AT THE TOWN HALL AT 7.30PM.**

PRESENT:

The Mayor (Councillor G Whiting)
The Deputy Mayor (Councillor R J Gell)

Councillor M Beesley	Councillor A Dunn
Councillor Mrs K Dunn	Councillor H L Jackson
Councillor D C Lawson MBE	Councillor Mrs S Mantle
Councillor Mrs V M Newbery	Councillor A M T Reading
Councillor Mrs A Sauntson	Councillor P Tomas
Councillor Mrs M Tuffnail	Councillor Mrs P H Whiting
Councillor S Wiles	Mr D Wicks (Mayor's Sergeant)

Mrs S J Mitcham (Town Clerk)

IN ATTENDANCE: PC D Brown and Canon R Stainer.

15/19. **PRAVERS**

The meeting was opened with prayers led by Canon Richard Stainer.

15/20. **APOLOGIES**

Cllr Mrs C Ingram and District Cllr G Harwood MBE.

15/21. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Other Interests

Cllr Mrs A Sauntson, Cllr H L Jackson, Cllr S Wiles- Item 26 Request from Tourism- Members of Higham Ferrers Tourism.

Cllr Mrs A Sauntson, Cllr H L Jackson, Cllr Mr V Newbery – Item 13.4. (i) – Members of Twinning Association

Cllr Mrs A Sauntson, Cllr H L Jackson, Cllr S Wiles – Item 8.1. (i) Planning 78 Northampton Rd – Know neighbour to property.

Cllr Mrs V Newbery – Item 8.1. (ii) Planning – Carriage House – Lives next door to applicant.

Cllr H L Jackson – Item 8.1. (ii) Planning – Carriage House – Lives 50m away.

Cllr Mrs M Tuffnail – Item 13.1. BP56 - Daughter –in Laws Salary.

15/22. **MINUTES**

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 27th January 2015 be signed by the Mayor as being a true and correct record.

15/23. **POLICING**

PC D Brown gave the following report:-

	2014	2015
Criminal Damage	5	5
Burglary Other	0	0
Theft of Motor Vehicle	5	2
Violent Offences	3	3

A new initiative called 'Off Limits' was due to start with the aim of reducing violence across towns. There was a schools initiative to promote the danger of knife crime. PC Brown agreed to follow up the possibility of a mobile speed camera in

- Vine Hill Drive.
- 15/24. **PUBLIC FORUM (15 minutes)**
No public present.
- 15/25. **MAYORS ANNOUNCEMENTS.**
- | | |
|------------------------------------|--|
| Sunday 8 th February | Desborough Civic Service |
| Sunday 8 th February | Northampton University Awards |
| Thursday 12 th February | Receiving cheque from ENC for Skate Park funding |
| Friday 13 th February | Civic Dinner |
| Friday 20 th February | Official Opening of Skate Park |
- REMINDER**
- | | |
|-------------------------------|--|
| Sunday March 29 th | Afternoon Tea at Rushden Hall Tickets £10 limited to 50. |
| Friday April 24 th | RAF Band Concert – Bowls Club £15 tickets |
| Saturday May 2 nd | Mayor’s Market |
- 15/26. **PLANNING.**
- 15/26.1 **To consider responses to the following planning applications received: -**
- (i) **15/00263/FUL: Two storey rear extension, alterations to roof to provide an additional bedroom and provision of footpath crossing to provide vehicle access to parking space in front garden 78 Northampton Rd, Higham Ferrers. RESOLVED:**
That the response ‘No Comment’ be made.
- (ii) **15/00186/VAR: Variation of conditions 2 and 8 to increase first floor extension, omit east facing windows, modify roof over extension to have hipped and flat roof elements, remove existing metal fire exit to the second floor replacing with spiral stairs and add first floor windows to the west elevation pursuant to planning permission 13/02198/FUL: The Carriage House, 13 Market Square, Higham Ferrers RESOLVED:**
That concerns about the proximity to nearby properties be raised.
- (iii) **15/00220/FUL: Rebuild and repair to accidental damage to external boundary wall pier to match existing piers: Charles Parker Building, Midland Rd, Higham Ferrers. RESOLVED:**
That the response ‘No Comment’ be made.
- (iv) **14/00607/FUL: Erection of pair of semi-detached dwellings and new access: 53 Handcross Way, Higham Ferrers.(Amended Plans) RESOLVED:**
That the response ‘No Comment’ be made.
- 15/26.2. **To note determinations on planning applications. RESOLVED:**
That the report on determination of planning applications previously considered be noted.
- 15/26.3. **To receive a report from Cllr Mrs A Sauntson on Rushden East RESOLVED:**
That the report previously circulated be noted.
- 15/26.4. **To consider requesting an extra seat on the Rushden East Project Board. RESOLVED:**
That the Council request a second seat on the Rushden East Board and that an item be included on the next agenda about meeting with the Duchy of Lancaster representative.

15/27. **TOWN CLERKS REPORT**

Feeder Pillar, High Street

Following on from the Environment Committee a complaint was made about the dangerous location of the feeder pillar near the crossing. Highways have confirmed that an order has been given to move it.

Bollard on Kings Meadow Lane footpath.

Following a complaint about the lack of visibility of bollard on the 'Greenway' this is going to be addressed by adding reflective strips.

RESOLVED:

That the Town Clerks report be received and noted.

15/28. **QUESTIONS.**

Cllr Mrs M Tuffnail requested that consideration be given to installing a dog bin in the Westfields St area as there were issues with dog mess not being picked up in this area.

Cllr Mrs K Dunn asked whether the Doctors Surgery had responded re the location for a Defibrillator. Clerk would check.

15/29. **REPORTS OF REPRESENTATIVES TO OTHER BODIES.**

Cllr Mrs V Newbery reported on the Twinning Association. It was the 25th Anniversary of the signing of the concord with Hachenburg, and the Twinning Association were giving each guest a copy of the Charter. 45 would be visiting between 31st July and 3rd August.

15/30. **METHODIST CHURCH**

RESOLVED:

That the Methodist Circuit Superintendent Minister, Rev Margaret Eales be invited to a meeting with the Methodist Church Working Party to discuss any future plans for the Higham Ferrers Methodist Church. The Working Party would report back to the Town Council.

15/31. **FINANCE.**

15/31.1. **To approve accounts for payment as at 24th February 2015.**

RESOLVED:

That the accounts for payment totalling £107,877.91 be paid

15/32.2. **To approve the Bank Account reconciliation as at 31st December 2014 and 30th January 2015.**

RESOLVED:

That the bank reconciliations as at 31st December 2014 and 30th January 2015 be signed by the Mayor after being checked by Cllr D C Lawson MBE.

15/33.3. **To receive and note the budget report as at 31st January 2015.**

RESOLVED:

That the budget report as at 31st January 2015 be received and noted.

15/34.4. **To consider following items of expenditure:**

(i) **Purchase of Magna Carta Coins to commemorate 25 Anniversary of Twinning Link.**

To mark the 25th Anniversary of the Twinning link with Hachenburg it had been suggested that the Council give each visitor a Magna Carta 2015 £2 coin. There was discussion over whether the gift should be more relevant to Higham Ferrers and whether the Council should be funding the gift.

RESOLVED:

That the matter be deferred whilst information on alternatives was researched.

(ii) **Purchase of a 'No Ball Games' Sign for Saffron Road Car Park.**

RESOLVED:

That a sign be purchased for the Saffron Road Car Park within a budget of £200.

15/34.5. **To ratify expenditure under Clerk's delegated powers.**

RESOLVED:

The following expenditure under Clerk's delegated powers be ratified:-

All figures include VAT.

The RADAR Key – Radar Keys - £28.20

Rutherfords Locksmiths Ltd – New lock for Cemetery Chapel gate.

W Cave Ltd– Lighting outside Pavilion - £290.39

Information Commissioner – Data Protection Renewal - £35

Scribe 2000 Ltd – Accounts software annual licence- £354

S Pell – Repairs to Chains at War Memorial - £25

ESPO – Stationery £137.34

G M Mechanical Services Ltd – Repair heating College St premises - £1077.60

CVL Systems – Programme CCTV to new computer £90

15/35. **FOOTPATH TO FOOTBALL PITCHES**

RESOLVED:

That the item be deferred to the next meeting whilst more information and prices for a wider path be obtained.

15/36. **COMMITTEES**

15/36.1. **Planning Committee held on 10th February 2015.**

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Planning Committee held on 10th February 2015 be received and adopted.

15/36.2. **Policy and Resources Committee held on 10th February 2015.**

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Policy and Resources Committee held on 10th February 2015 be received and adopted.

Recommendations.

(i) **Sickness Absence Policy.**

RESOLVED:

That having reviewed the Sickness Absence Policy no amendments were required.

(ii) **Data Protection Policy.**

RESOLVED:

That having reviewed the Data Protection Policy no amendments were required.

(iii) **Retirement Policy.**

RESOLVED:

That having reviewed the Retirement Policy no amendments were required.

(iv) **Standing Orders.**

RESOLVED:

That the revised Standing Orders as drafted are adopted.

(v) **Statement of Community Engagement.**

RESOLVED:

That with the addition of a section on membership of committees by representatives of community groups that the Statement of Community Engagement be adopted.

(vi) **Training Statement of Intent.**

RESOLVED:

That the Training Statement of Intent as drafted be adopted.

(vii) **To review the Risk Assessments.**

RESOLVED:

That the report on the review of risk assessments and the 'Financial Risk Assessment' attached to the minutes be approved.

- (viii) **Review of Council Internal Controls and Internal Audit**
RESOLVED:
That having carried out the annual review of the Council's Internal Controls and Internal Audit procedures that the documents be adopted.
- (ix) **Appointment of Independent Internal Auditor for 2015/16**
RESOLVED:
That NCALC Internal Audit Service be appointed as Independent Internal Auditor for 2015/16.
- (x) **Mayors Allowance**
RESOLVED:
That the item be referred back to the Policy and Resources Committee to clarify the resolution.
- (xi) **Local Council Award Scheme**
RESOLVED:
That the Council apply for Quality Standard at a cost of £80 plus £50 registration fee.
- (xii) **Council IT System including Back-up**
RESOLVED:
That the quote detailed as follows be accepted:-
 - Synology DS214+, 2 x 2Tb Dives including delivery, **£425.00**
 - Site delivery, install and base configuration of Synology DS214+, **£100**
 - Transfer of data from existing Windows PC's to NAS, Configure user accounts, shared folders and access rights on NAS, Network setup of Synology NAS, Office PC's, Data and Printers, **£350**
 - Setup of Cloud Backup with Google Drive, **£190**
 - Google Drive Subscription at £9.99 per month.
Remote support of Synology NAS and Google Drive Backups with Open Technology, **£20 per month.**
- (xiii) **Tree Works**
RESOLVED:
That the quote of £1717.50 be accepted to carry out the scheduled tree works for 2015/16 and that the quote of £1450 for tree survey works at Riverside Park, Castle Fields, Saffron Road Recreation Ground and the Cemetery be accepted.
- (xiv) **Annual Clock Service**
RESOLVED:
That the Council enter into a 5 year Service Plan agreement for the Annual Clock Service at St Mary's Church at a cost of £782. This was a saving of £138.
- (xv) **Personal Licence Training**
RESOLVED:
That the Town Clerk undertakes the Personal Licence Training at a cost of £150 and apply for a Personal Licence at a cost of £37.
- (xvi) **Repairs to Cold Water Pipes -5 College Street**
RESOLVED:
That the quote of £1982 be accepted and a sum of £2000 be transferred from the Buildings Maintenance Reserve.

15/37. **NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN**
The Neighbourhood Plan was now out on 'Regulation 14' consultation until the 31st March 2015. There will be a stand on the Farmers' Market on 28th March to encourage people to respond and ask questions.

Cllr R J Gell stated that he thought it was an excellent document and congratulated the team that had put it together.

RESOLVED:

That the report be received and noted.

15/38. **CONSULTATIONS**

15/38.1. **North Northamptonshire Joint Planning Unit – Core Strategy.**

RESOLVED:

That the following response be sent:-

Overall the Town Council supports the Core Strategy and is pleased to see many references to Neighbourhood Plans. It has the following detailed comments to make.

Higham Ferrers Town Council supports the Vision and Outcomes, which echo the Vision and Objectives of Higham Ferrers Neighbourhood Plan, which is currently on Regulation 14 consultation. 66% of responses indicated that they agreed or strongly agreed with the Vision and Objectives for the Neighbourhood Plan with 22% having no preference.

The Council supports the designation of Higham Ferrers as a Market Town and the allocation of 560 houses.

The Council strongly supports and welcomes Policy 2- Historic Environment. This reinforces policies that have been included in the Neighbourhood Plan around use of materials and protecting the historic environment. As part of the work for the Neighbourhood Plan a Character Assessment has been produced for the town. In consultation with the residents when asked what they liked best about Higham Ferrers 63.9% said 'Historic Buildings' and 68.5% the 'Physical Appearance/Atmosphere'. Comments were made such as "Higham is losing its character and becoming one big housing estate merging into other towns".

In paragraph 3.81 the word 'should consider opportunities' should be changed to 'must'.

In paragraph 4.11 the Council is pleased to see reference to 'Building for Life' but feel that this should also be included in Policy 8- North Northamptonshire Place Shaping Principles.

Paragraph 4.36. Business *must* be able to access Next Generation Broadband technology and not should as stated. This should be the echoed in Policy 10 – Provision of Infrastructure.

Policy 12- Town Centres and Town Centre Uses paragraph d) – The Council is disappointed to see that Higham Ferrers is not mentioned. Higham Ferrers should be included in this policy as it closer to Rushden Lakes than Wellingborough and there will be a Town Centre Manager shared with Rushden to support Higham Ferrers.

The Council is extremely pleased to see that the funding for Chowns Mill is included in Policy 16 Connecting the Network of Settlements. In consultation 95% of residents supported improvements to this junction.

The Council is also pleased to see that the duelling of the A45 in-between Stanwick and Thrapston has been included in Policy 17 – North Northamptonshire's Strategic Connections and again in paragraph 6.32. For the economic prosperity of the area and to accommodate the traffic generated by the proposed housing growth this improvement is also desperately needed.

The Council queries whether Policy 30- Housing Mix and Tenure is strong enough to ensure that small dwellings are provided. Consultation in Higham Ferrers has shown that smaller housing including bungalows is what is wanted.

The Town Council supports the designation of Rushden as a Growth Town and supports the growth of the area known as Rusden East, but object to the broad area of growth indicated as it extends too far into the parish of Higham Ferrers. Growth should be further south where the A6 is not dual carriageway. The A6 to the east of Higham Ferrers poses a barrier to connectivity with the town because it is not

single carriageway. Consultation as part of the Neighbourhood Plan process indicates that residents would marginally accept medium growth in this area in the region of 150 dwellings. 36 % supported or strongly supported this view and 38% had no view.

If the preferred option for growth is approved it is acknowledged that growth will overlap the boundary into Higham Ferrers. In order to maintain the separate identity of the two towns the Council would want to see a substantial green infrastructure separation along the boundary. This could include formal or informal open space such as cemetery and allotments, which is infrastructure that is lacking in Higham Ferrers as well as additional recreational space.

In Policy 33 – Rushden East Sustainable Urban Extension there is no mention of Higham Ferrers. The broad area of growth as indicated on the maps is nearly as much to the east of Higham Ferrers as Rushden. This is misleading to residents of Higham Ferrers who will think it is only to the east of Rushden. It has already been indicated above that the Council object to the extent of the broad area of growth. Policy 13 paragraph d) -The Council is concerned at the statement in paragraph d) re safeguarding land for further development beyond the current scale of development, as they would not want to see development encroaching further into the boundary of Higham Ferrers Boundary.

Policy 13 paragraph b) -This must include connections to Higham Ferrers as well. The Council object to the allocation of Nene Valley Farm as an employment site. As stated in your document the site is within the Nene Valley Nature Improvement area and therefore is a key greenfield site and should remain as open space. The area is one of the best aspects about the entrance to the historic town of Higham Ferrers from this side and any employment development would have a detrimental impact on this open aspect.

Should Nene Valley Farm be included as an employment site as per policy 35 Higham Ferrers should be included in paragraph f) and paragraph 10.51 in the supporting text, as this does also provide a landmark gateway to Higham Ferrers.

15/38.2. **Chelveston-cum-Caldecott Parish Council – Neighbourhood Plan.**

RESOLVED:

That the following response be sent:-

Higham Ferrers Town Council is producing a Neighbourhood Plan in parallel with Chelveston-cum-Caldecott. The draft plan for Higham Ferrers is on Regulation 14 consultation until 31st March 2015. The two plans are seen as complementary and from the screening opinions/assessment of environmental impacts we did not consider that there are individual or in-combination effects which would have a Likely Significant Effect (LSE).

15/39. **SCHOOL CROSSING PATROL**

RESOLVED:

That the matter be deferred to allow members to assimilate the information that had been received late.

15/40. **RUSHDEN-HIGHAM LINK**

Expresslines have asked that the timetable be changed for the Rushden-Higham Link. Feedback on the services indicates that the services to Irthlingborough and Crown Park are little used and takes too long. It is proposed to cut out Irthlingborough and Crown Park and to make the journeys quicker.

RESOLVED:

That the Council have no objections to the proposed timetable changes.

- 15/41. **HENRY CHICHELE SCHOOL**
RESOLVED:
That the Council agree to the continued use of the 'Stirrup' for staff and parent parking. There was to be no parking by construction lorries.
- 15/42. **RIVERSIDE PARK**
RESOLVED:
That the Town Council agree to fund 50% of the cost of the condition report. Funds to be taken from Building Maintenance reserve should this be required following end of year budget analysis.
- 15/43. **BUSINESS/FORWARD PLAN**
A copy of the draft plan had been circulated.
RESOLVED
That Cllr D C Lawson MBE, Cllr Mrs A Sauntson, Cllr G Whiting, Cllr H L Jackson and the Town Clerk form a working party to finalise the Forward Plan. Councillors to submit any comments to the Clerk by 13th March.
- 15/44. **CLOSURE OF THE MEETING TO THE 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 and sensitive nature of the following item of business, the Press and the Public be excluded from the meeting.
- 15/45. **APPEAL**
An appeal had been received against the application of non-resident fees to an internment in the cemetery.
RESOLVED:
That the Council allow the appeal because of the length of time the deceased had lived in the town.
- 15/46. **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.
- 15/47. **REQUEST FROM HIGHAM FERRERS TOURISM**
Higham Ferrers Tourism has written offering to donate funds of £416 and the cost of the flowers and labour to the Town Council for 4 flower barrier planters.
RESOLVED:
That the Council agree to purchase 4 flower barrier planters for the railings near Colemans Shop at a cost of £416.
- 15/48. **ITEMS TO REPORT.**
Cllr S Wiles reported that Higham Ferrers Tourism had agreed to donate £21000 towards the upgrading of the streetlights in the Market Square area to heritage lights.

Mayor

Date

